

Avoiding and reducing surplus bread at the retail and consumer level by awareness raising leading to behavioural change

FOODRUS

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PRACTICE ABSTRACT NO.6

#Bread
#Overproduction
#Waste



The FOODRUS project will test 23 circular solutions to limit food loss and waste across three food value chains: vegetables and prepared salads (in Spain); meat and fish (in Denmark); and bread (in Slovakia).

The main priority of the FOODRUS work in Slovakia is to find solutions to prevent the loss and waste of bread within the final stages of the value chain, especially at consumer and retail level, and improve the distribution of surplus bread for human consumption by removing the current obstacles that hamper donations.

In Slovakia, bread is central to many national customs and traditions, and is part of the cultural heritage. As an integral part of the national identity, it should not feature among the most wasted foods in the country. In fact, wasting bread should be socially unacceptable.

Overproduction of bread is the main problem generating the biggest amount of bread wasted. A key strategy to prevent and reduce this problem is the organisation of behavioural change awareness campaigns targeting consumers, which would enable a transformational change throughout the whole bread value chain.

According to the partners of the FOODRUS project, the main hotspots for bread loss and waste are situated in households, retail and the HORECA sector. Due to the absence of official statistical data, preliminary estimates were made by the FOODRUS Consortium, according to which production contributes 5%, HORECA 15%, retail 30% and households 50% to waste in the bread value chain.¹ Therefore, behavioural change of consumers is essential and can bring a transformational change into the whole food value chain.

In line with the EU waste hierarchy, the FOODRUS project considers the prevention of surplus bread and its re-use for human consumption as the most preferred options, followed by redistribution for animal feed, recycling of nutrients, and finally, energy recovery.

[1] Please note that these estimations were made by the FOODRUS partners on the basis of a combination of public and confidential data provided by the Slovak Food Research Institute, the Slovak Association for Modern Business and interviews with project partners.



To achieve these goals, a more active cooperation and participation of all relevant actors along the whole food chain and across all the involved sectors will be established over all stages of the project.

To reduce the loss and waste of bread, FOODRUS implemented several citizen-science activities, such as: research activities with households, development of a zero waste (bread) cookbook, campaign for supermarket customers, e-learning for schools, alliance of supermarkets for sharing the best practices, etc.

In addition, a Communication Plan was developed with the aim to raise awareness among the public on food waste issues (through workshops, webinars, presentations, events, conferences, videos, topical articles, blogs and news releases). A webpage in Slovak was developed for communication, information and research purposes: www.jedloniejeodpad.sk. Its domain translates as "food is not the waste".

Slovakia is a slow mover in the area of food loss and waste, with few existing mechanisms that are outdated and non-functional. Recently this agenda was reopened by the government. Currently there is a lack of statistics throughout the whole bread value chain, as well as many legislative barriers to food donations. State authorities have also failed to commit many resources to awareness raising. In addition, the domestic policy agenda related to food loss and waste is under the responsibility of two ministries, which creates an even bigger challenge in trying to reduce bread waste and losses.

About

Coordinated by the University of Deusto and comprising 27 partners from 10 different European countries, the EU-funded FOODRUS project aims to limit food losses and waste, and to promote resource efficiency across all stages of the agri-food value chain. FOODRUS is working to tackle the food waste and losses by creating resilient food systems across nine European regions. To achieve this, the project will test 23 circular solutions through diverse forms of collaborative innovation.

Consortium



www.foodrus.eu



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