



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



29 September 2020
**International Day of Awareness
of Food Loss and Waste**

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



Get Involved!

The observance of the First International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste (IDAFLW) on 29 September 2020 will make a clear call to action for both the public (national or local authorities) and the private (businesses and individuals) sectors to bolster efforts to reduce food loss and waste toward ensuring food security for all and particularly the most vulnerable, impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

THEME

Few issues have generated as much public interest in recent years as food loss and waste. But why is it important to reduce food loss and waste?

Simply put, reducing food loss and waste can bring about benefits to society as a whole and can result in:

- increased food availability to the most vulnerable
- a reduction in GHG emissions
- reduced pressure on land and water resources
- increased in productivity and economic growth

Tackling food loss and waste is, therefore, essential to increase the efficiency in the way our food is produced, distributed and consumed.

The crisis triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic, continues to highlight the fragility and weaknesses of our food systems, and has launched a global wake-up call on the need to re-envision our food systems, with special attention to addressing ways in which food is lost and/or wasted.

During the pandemic we have indeed witnessed significant increases of food loss and waste: levels of losses in perishable agricultural produce and products in the supply chain showed a dramatic increase, owing to the restriction of movements that hampered food transportation to markets or market access by consumers.

Surging job losses mean that people are losing income to buy food. This has resulted in an increased demand for the services of food banks. Food banks are nevertheless facing a number of challenges in distributing food, due to the restrictions of movements and the physical distancing measures adopted to curb the pandemic.

As the pandemic continues to wreak havoc globally, putting food security and nutrition at risk in many countries and affecting the incomes and livelihoods of small producers, especially in developing countries, we are once more reminded of the need to place emphasis on assuring food availability, especially for the most vulnerable.

Actions are required globally to maximize the use of food that is produced, and to bolster efforts to reduce food loss and waste, toward averting a global food security crisis.



DID YOU KNOW

- Approximately **14 percent** of the food produced for consumption globally each year is lost between harvest and the wholesale market.
- **38 percent** of total energy consumption in the global food system is utilized to produce food that is either lost or wasted (FAO, 2015a).
- Post-harvest losses can decrease the **food availability** and reduce incomes of small holders.
- The strongest positive food security impacts are likely to be had by reducing food loss **early in the supply chain** – in particular on farm loss – in countries with high levels of food insecurity.
- Reducing loss along the supply chain has the economic benefit that it can increase **productivity** and improve **profitability**.
- **Food redistribution activities** can address food insecurity and prevent the wastage of food surpluses, ensuring economic, environmental, and social benefits.
- Reducing food waste at the **consumer level** can save money.
- There is a **robust business case** for companies, countries, and cities to reduce food loss and waste.
- Reducing food loss and waste along the **supply chain** is an important option which will reduce the amount of emissions per unit of food consumed.
- The lack of comparable and reliable information, constitutes a **major obstacle** to the development of effectively targeted policies to reduce food loss and waste.
- Food loss and waste reduction can play an important role **in advancing the SDGs**, in particular those related to food security and nutrition and environmental sustainability.



CALLS TO ACTION

Reducing food loss and waste is a shared responsibility. Governments, the private sector, civil society, development agencies, research and academic institutions and consumers must seek to identify new and more effective solutions – be it products, technologies, social arrangements, or institutional/ organizational and policy processes – to sustainably reduce food loss and waste. Collaboration is needed at many levels, and particularly among the public and private sectors, and with research and development institutions to promote innovations that contribute to food loss and waste reduction, locally, nationally, regionally and globally.

Governments and decision makers

- Target investments and create incentives to bolster efforts to reduce food losses and ensure food security of the poor and vulnerable.
- Facilitate and leverage private sector investments to reduce food losses and waste through key partnerships.
- Educate consumers on the meaning of “use-by” and “best before date” marks to ensure they are used appropriately, toward reducing household food waste.
- Develop and support social policies and targeted innovative solutions to facilitate food redistribution where needed.

Private actors of the food supply chain

- Supply chain stakeholders and food business operators must tap into knowledge, apply innovation and innovative approaches and identify resources - public and private - to scale up actions to reduce food loss and waste in the supply chain.
- Private actors should encourage the establishment of targeted platforms to share knowledge and practices on food loss and waste reduction;
- The food wholesale and retail sector must step-up its efforts to donate surplus food to charities and food banks.

Research and academia

- Research institutions and academia must continue to provide support in developing innovations and in providing training support and technology development to reduce food loss and waste.

Consumers

- Consumers must stock and store their food properly in the household and pay attention to date marking to reduce food waste.
- Consumers, where possible, must donate unwanted, unopened and intact food to charities that can redistribute the food to those in need.



COMMUNICATIONS TOOLKIT

Here below is a list of materials produced to promote the IDAFLW in the six official languages of FAO, and which are accessible on the [IDAFLW website](#) and in the [IDAFLW 2020 Asset Bank](#). Share them with external partners or providers and follow our website for updates as new material will be added over the coming months.

What is the IDAFLW 2020 Asset Bank?

The **IDAFLW 2020 Asset Bank** provides links to a range of downloadable IDAFLW communications materials in low resolution (to share digitally) and high resolution (for printing or production). Before looking at it, read through the information on content available below. Most products are already available in the six FAO languages and others will be uploaded by August 2020. **IDAFLW 2020 Asset Bank** can be easily shared with external partners who wish to produce or promote **#FLWDay** products.

IDAFLW poster

The IDAFLW poster can be downloaded from the [IDAFLW 2020 Asset Bank](#). The standard measurement is 100 x 70 cm, with both horizontal and vertical formats available.



IDAFLW ribbon

You may find that your partners cannot always use the full IDAFLW visual. In some cases 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 if you need the ribbon for your own events or wish to distribute it to partners.



Web banners

IDAFLW 2020 **web banners** [Long top banner (640 x 360 px) and square sidebar (480 x 271 px) formats] are provided in the [IDAFLW 2020 Asset Bank](#).



Gadgets

The [IDAFLOW 2020 Asset Bank](#) provides graphics for the local printing or production of:

- **t-shirts**
- **mugs**
- **bags**

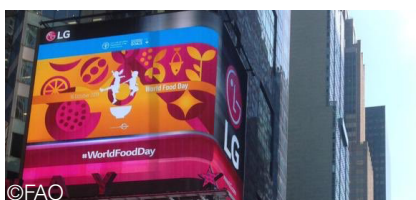


HOW TO PARTICIPATE



Organise an IDAFLW event

Although we mark IDAFLW this year in very unprecedented circumstances, you can still 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. Organising events, such as food tastings, cooking demonstrations concerts, festivals, roundtables or public lectures with a food loss and waste message that can be as effective online!



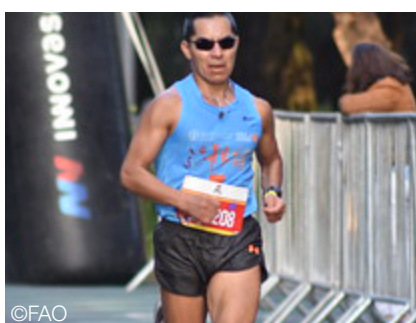
Bring the IDAFLW to your town or city

Approach municipalities, outdoor advertisers, transportation companies (e.g. city metro, buses or trains), shopping malls, cinemas or airports now, 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 change their attitudes toward being proactive in reducing food waste.



Recreation and Sport

Platforms, such as Skype and Zoom, have become modes for organizing online activities for exercise. Organise an online exercising 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.



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.





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!



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!

Let us know about your IDAFLW event!

As you can see, there are a lot of 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.



FAO INITIATIVES ON FOOD LOSS AND WASTE

FAO's support to the International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste initiative 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 government, the private sector, civil society and academia to promote awareness about food loss and waste and its impacts in an effort to bring about behaviour change.

- 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. See website: <http://www.fao.org/platform-food-loss-waste/en/>
- 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, is accessible at: <http://www.fao.org/food-loss-and-food-waste/food-loss-and-waste-data/en/>
- An **Educational Package titled 'Do Good: Save Food!'** developed by FAO in collaboration with the International Food Waste Coalition, seeks to sensitize children ranging in age from 5 to 14 years on reducing food waste, and is accessible online at: <http://www.fao.org/sustainable-development-goals/indicators/1231/en/>
- An on-line **e-learning course on the FAO food loss analysis methodology and its application** is accessible at: <http://www.fao.org/food-loss-reduction/resources/flaelearning/en/>
- State of Food and Agriculture. 2019. <http://www.fao.org/state-of-food-agriculture/en/>
- Mitigating risks to food systems during COVID-19. 2020. Reducing food loss and waste <http://www.fao.org/3/ca9056en/ca9056en.pdf>



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

Starting in 2020, the International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste will be observed to promote awareness and collective action to reduce food loss and waste.



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/
[#FLWDay](https://twitter.com/FLWDay)



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