UNIVERSITY OF MAURITIUS, FACULTY OF AGRICULTURE

Food Loss & Food Waste
Reduction & Recovery Initiative

CONference on
Food Loss & Food Waste Reduction & Recovery
Faculty of Agriculture in collaboration with
the Mauritius Research Council
27th-28th February 2018

EXPERT WORKING SESSION
1st March 2018

AWARENESS CAMPAIGN
February 2018 - March 2019

http://sites.uom.ac.mu/foodloss
FOOD LOSS AND FOOD WASTE REDUCTION AND RECOVERY INITIATIVE

THE FLoWeR² INITIATIVE 2018-2019

FACULTY OF AGRICULTURE
UNIVERSITY OF MAURITIUS
INTRODUCTION

The Faculty of Agriculture (FoA) of the University of Mauritius is leading the “Food Loss and Waste Reduction and Recovery” Initiative (hereafter referred to as FLoWeR² Initiative) scheduled over one year (February 2018 to March 2019) with the aim of creating national awareness on food loss and food waste reduction and recovery among all stakeholders along the agri-food value chain. This initiative is in line with the Target 12.3 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which is “halving per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reducing food losses along production and supply chains” by 2030.

The FLoWeR² Initiative englobes three major activities as shown in Figure 1:

1. **The FORUM ON POSTHARVEST LOSSES OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES** was organised by the Faculty of Agriculture in collaboration with the Food and Agricultural Research and Extension Institute (FAREI) on the 15th February 2018 at the University of Mauritius. The resource person was Mr Shubham Chandra from Chandra Associates from USA. He gave a talk on *Intelligent Polymer Membrane Technology for Shelf Life Extension of Fruits and Vegetables*. Participants had the opportunity to have a look at the bag samples. Mrs Soodha Munbodh, Research/ Senior Research Scientist from FAREI, also gave a presentation on *Status of Post Harvest Losses in Mauritius*. Forty four participants from various sectors of the food chain participated in the forum (Annex 1) and interactive discussions focused on causes of postharvest losses and measures to be taken for postharvest reduction.

2. **The CONFERENCE ON FOOD LOSS AND FOOD WASTE REDUCTION AND RECOVERY** was held from 27th February to 1st March 2018. The chief guest for the opening ceremony scheduled on the 27th February was the Honourable Mahen Kumar Seeruttun, Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security (MAIFS). The Initiative was officially launched by the Chancellor of the University of Mauritius, Dr Jean Claude Autrey. The keynote speaker Dr.
Mireille Totobesola-Barbier, Project Manager of the FAO/ IFAD/ WFP joint ‘Mainstreaming food loss reduction initiatives for smallholders in food deficit areas’ project, addressed the audience on *The global effort on food loss and waste reduction*. This conference also saw the participation of Mr Vijay Yadav Tokala, Member of the Board of Directors of the Postharvest Education Foundation (PEF), USA; Professor Elna Buys, Head of the Department of Consumer and Food Sciences, University of Pretoria, and eight local speakers. During the first two days, various facets of food loss and food waste were uncovered such as current international initiatives, opportunities for capacity building, local and international research projects, and food loss and waste related activities in Mauritius. Eighty four participants (Appendix 2) from all the sectors of the agri-food value chain participated and shared their concern, their involvement in food reduction and recovery and their expectations.

The last day of the conference was the EXPERT WORKING SESSION which was held on the 1st March 2018. Thirty eight participants (Appendix 3) from the different sectors of the agri-food value chain brainstormed on different aspects: (i) sources of food loss and waste at the level of all actors in the agri-food value chain in Mauritius, (ii) activities/actions required to reduce food loss and waste at the level of all the actors in the agri-food value chain in Mauritius and (iii) major projects to reduce food loss and waste at level of all actors in the agri-food value chain in Mauritius.

A framework was thus devised in collaboration with the participants. The four pillars for this framework were identified as: Research, Capacity Building, Sensitization/Awareness creation and Policy/Advocacy (Figure 2).
2.1: Description of proposed activities under each pillar

Tables 1, 2, 3 and 4 summarise the various activities that are expected to be organized during the year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Awareness/Sensitisation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activities</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posters to be developed under the FLoWeR² initiative on Food Loss and Food waste for different target groups</td>
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<tr>
<td>Talks in schools</td>
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<tr>
<td>TV/Radio campaign</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sensitisation with consumers in food courts / retail outlets through pamphlets /posters-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Campaigns with different Ministries on sustainable production and consumption</td>
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<tr>
<td>Encourage stakeholders to develop/adopt at least one poster and to use in their organisation</td>
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### Table 2: Research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Time Frame</th>
<th>Responsible organization</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Determination of food Loss along the food chain (Lead: FAREI; funding to be sourced from Ministry of Agroindustry and food Security)</td>
<td>Submission of research proposal in July 2018</td>
<td>FAREI</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessment of Food Waste in retail and hospitality sectors</td>
<td>Submission of research proposal in March 2018 (Potential Funding Body- UoM)</td>
<td>FoA/UoM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of simple, innovative technologies to reduce food loss and food waste</td>
<td>Submission of research proposals in July 2018 (Potential Funding Bodies- MRC, UoM, Tertiary Education Commission)</td>
<td>Any interested stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of e-platform for sharing of information among waste producers and food waste users</td>
<td>March-July 2018</td>
<td>FoA in collaboration with the Mauritius Research Council (MRC)</td>
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### Table 3: Capacity Building

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Time Frame</th>
<th>Responsible organization</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Training /workshops for different target groups E.g. Hospitality sector in collaboration with MITD and Institut Escoffier</td>
<td>June 2018-September 2018</td>
<td>FoA/Stakeholders in the hospitality sector</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organisation of paid workshop with Expert on waste reduction and recovery in the hospitality sector</td>
<td>June 2018-December 2018</td>
<td>FoA/Institut Escoffier/Association des Hôteliers et Restaurateurs de l’île Maurice (AHRIM)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Training of trainers</td>
<td>June-September 2018</td>
<td>FoA/Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare Ministry of Education and Human Resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>Promotion of free e-learning on postharvest losses from PEF and FAO targeting University students and stakeholders</td>
<td>May 2018</td>
<td>FoA/UOM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Revamping of curriculum at the Faculty of Agriculture, UoM. Topics on Food waste and Food loss reduction and recovery can be included in curriculum at all levels. For example, in all programmes in Agriculture and Food Science and Technology of the Faculty of Agriculture</td>
<td>September to November 2018 during new programme development</td>
<td>FoA/UOM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revamping of primary and secondary school curriculum</td>
<td>Request to be the Mauritius Institute of Education (MIE) in May 2018</td>
<td>FoA/ Mauritius Institute of Education (MIE)</td>
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Table 4: Policy/Advocacy

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<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Time Frame</th>
<th>Responsible organisation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Submission of a policy brief on requirements of actors in the agri-food</td>
<td>April 2018</td>
<td>FoA/UoM</td>
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<td>value chain (e.g. food storage equipment; better packaging materials)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preparation of guidelines on food recovery and sharing</td>
<td>December 2018</td>
<td>FoA/Other stakeholders</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proposal for revision of legislation on date marking</td>
<td>May-June 2018</td>
<td>FOA /Other stakeholders</td>
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**Policy paper to be sent to the Ministry of Agroindustry and Food Security**

It has been recommended to draft and submit a policy in favour of obtaining subsidies on food storage equipment and better packaging materials.

**Preparation of Guidelines on Food Recovery and Sharing**

While a proper data collection in Mauritius is desirable to provide further information, there is enough global scientific evidence as well empirical within the country to justify urgent actions to facilitate the food sharing and food donation in the island. It is recommended that Government establishes a centralized coordinating structure which will harmonize all existing initiatives under same guidelines ensuring that legal framework and food safety requirements are respected in all cases. Government can provide an enabling environment for the food sharing initiative to operate within a proper legal framework. The setting up of a proper legal framework is a paramount and will put Mauritius as the first African country tackling officially food waste at Governmental level setting the example for many other countries and benefiting from prestigious visibility at global level.

**Proposal for revision of legislation on date marking**

The Faculty of Agriculture can organise meetings/forum with Ministry Of Health and Quality of Life, Mauritius Standards Bureau, Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry, representatives of the retail industry and consumers organisations to discuss about the negative impact of the current legislation on date marking and food waste. Thereafter, proposals can be made on improving the date marking requirements on food labels.
3 The AWARENESS CAMPAIGN will last over one year (February 2018-March 2019), through sensitisation via media, quiz and poster competitions for school children, as well as short tailor-made workshops for different target audience on waste recovery and reduction targeting producers, consumers, school children, food industries, catering and hospitality sectors among others. The activities include what have been proposed under sensitization/awareness creation but will not necessarily be restricted to these.

WAY FORWARD

The Faculty of Agriculture will seek the collaboration of the different stakeholders for the various tasks. A workshop will be organised in March 2019 to take stock of all the ongoing and completed activities as part of the FLoWeR² Initiative and discuss on the way forward.

The activities planned over one year are given in the Gantt Chart (Appendix 4). Implementation of the activities will require the collaboration of all stakeholder and funding. The Faculty of Agriculture is very keen to collaborate with our stakeholders. We thus invite the Community at large to share their ideas and send their suggestions.

COMMUNICATION ABOUT THE EVENT

- A dedicated website (http://sites.uom.ac.mu/foodloss/) has been developed to inform about the Initiative and the activities that are being organized. This website has been operational since February 2018 and will be regularly updated through March. All the documents related to the Forum and the conference have been posted. A useful list of resources has been posted on the page; additional relevant documents will added in due course.

- A facebook account has been created for exchange of information. https://m.facebook.com/mauritiusfoodlosswasteinitiatives/

- The Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) provided a good coverage of the conference. A one hour programme on Food loss and Food waste is being prepared by the MBC to be projected as a dossier in April 2018. There has been one press article regarding the conference.

- Information about the Initiative has been posted on the website of the Postharvest Education Foundation, USA.

- Information on the FLoWeR² initiative will be posted on the FAO Global Community of Practice on food loss reduction platform.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The contribution of our valued sponsors towards the FLoWeR$^2$ initiative is duly acknowledged.

- Chandra Associates, USA
- CIEL Limited
- Domaine de Labourdonnais
- Ducray Lenoir
- Eclosia Group
- FAREI
- Les Moulins de La Concorde
- Maurilait Production Ltee
- Mauritian Academy of Science and Technology
- Mauritius Research Council
- Postharvest Education Foundation, USA
- Tertiary Education Commission
- VegMe

This Initiative also benefitted from the support of the Food and Agricultural Organisation.

Organising Committee

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Mr Vinay Baungally
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D. Goburdhun 26$^{th}$ March 2018