



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



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



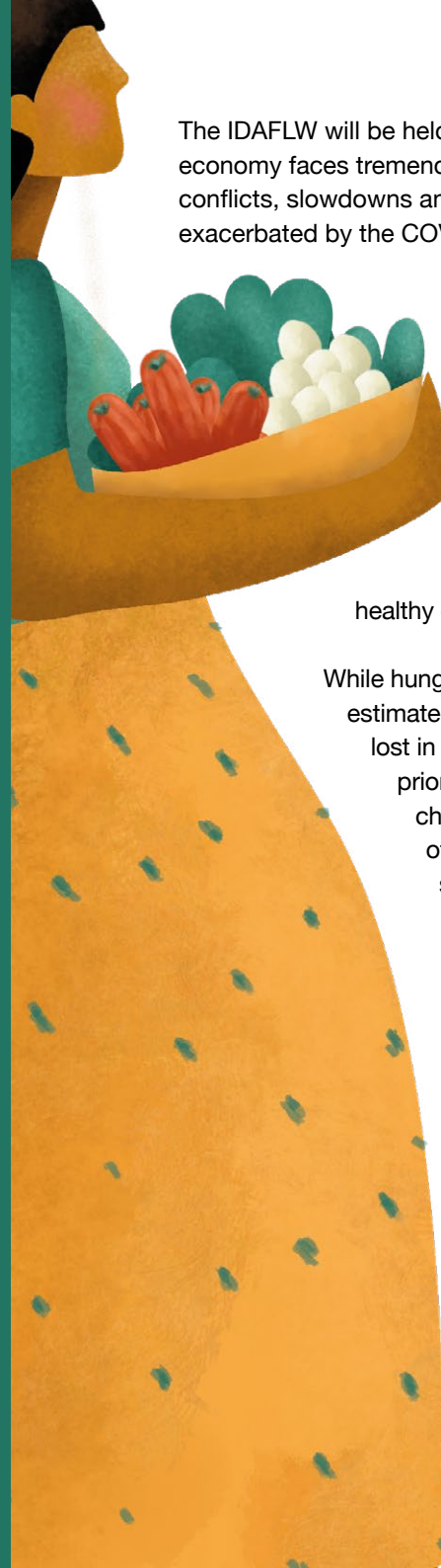
# GET INVOLVED!

THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL DAY  
OF AWARENESS OF FOOD LOSS AND  
WASTE (IDAFLW) WILL BE OBSERVED  
ON 29 SEPTEMBER 2023.

The IDAFLW will make a clear call  
to action for public and private  
entities to **take action to reduce  
food loss and waste (FLW)**  
**towards transforming agrifood  
systems to contribute to the  
achievement of the 2030 Agenda.**



# FOR THE PEOPLE! FOR THE PLANET!



The IDAFLW will be held at a time when the global economy faces tremendous strain from climate change, conflicts, slowdowns and downturns and high food prices exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the on-going war in Ukraine.

The 2023 report of the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World ([FAO et al., 2023](#)) highlights that up to 783 million people across the globe faced hunger in 2022, while more than 3.1 billion people were unable to afford a healthy diet in 2021).

While hunger and food security continue, an estimated 13 percent of the world's food is lost in the supply chain from post-harvest prior to the retail stage of the supply chain ([FAO, 2022](#)); a further 17 percent of food is wasted in households, food services and in retail ([UNEP, 2021](#)).

Currently, many of the world's agrifood systems are unsustainable, as they degrade agricultural land, contribute to greenhouse gas emissions and loss of biodiversity and consume groundwater. Food systems are also vulnerable to external climate and other shocks, partly because of the impact on the environment.

Action is required to transform agrifood systems globally, to improve their

resilience, efficiency, sustainability and inclusiveness in ways that positively impact food security, enable healthy diets, and contribute to better nutritional outcomes. All this must be achieved, however, while balancing trade-offs to mitigate the effects upon our natural resource base (land, water, biodiversity) and climate.

Reducing food loss and waste can play a key role in the transformation of agrifood systems by increasing the availability of food, contributing to food security, healthy diets, and building resilience. Food loss and food waste reduction also serves as a key climate strategy by reducing greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs). It can therefore help countries and businesses to raise climate ambition, while conserving and protecting our ecosystems and natural resources upon which the future of food depends.

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. Target 16 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) among other issues, also calls for “halving global food waste by 2030”. We need to urgently accelerate the pace of actions to reduce food loss and waste, and transform agrifood systems, so as to meet the SDG 12.3 Target, and that set by the GBF – with tangible benefits for people and the planet.

# DID YOU KNOW?



- Agrifood systems encompass farming, harvesting, fishing, livestock rearing, storing, processing, transporting, selling, buying, eating and disposal of our food. They also include non-food resources from agriculture, such as cotton and forest products ([FAO, 2021](#)).
- Agrifood systems account for one-third of total greenhouse gas emissions, ([FAO, 2021](#)).
- Pre and post-production processes in agrifood systems emit significant amounts of methane, a potent greenhouse gas generated mainly from the decay of solid food waste in landfills and open dumps ([Tubiello et al., 2022](#)).
- Biodiversity is responsible for our food, our soil, our water, our weather, even the air we breathe. Our global agrifood systems are the primary driver of biodiversity loss ([UNEP et al., 2021](#)).
- Should the global population reach 9.6 billion by 2050, the equivalent of almost three Earth-sized planets would be required to provide the natural resources needed to sustain current lifestyles ([UN, Goal 12 Facts and Figures](#)).
- The highest levels of food loss occur in foods – fruits and vegetables, meat and fish – that are also nutrient dense ([FAO, 2022](#)).
- Food waste is not just a problem in high-income countries: household food waste per capita is broadly similar across high, upper-middle and lower-middle income countries ([UNEP, 2021](#)).
- Reducing food loss and waste contributes to enhancing the sustainability and resilience of our agrifood systems ([FAO, 2021](#)).
- Concerted action can lead to real change: research and experience shows that a combination of interventions to alter consumer behaviour, including public awareness campaigns and effective public-private partnerships can significantly reduce food waste at the national level ([UNEPCC, 2021](#)).



# GLOBAL FACTS AND FIGURES



- Globally, agrifood systems produce some 11 billion tonnes of food each year and form the backbone of many economies ([FAO, 2021](#)).
- In 2019, global agrifood system emissions accounted for 31 percent of total anthropogenic emissions ([FAOSTAT Emissions Shares Database, 2019](#)).
- During the period 2010-2016, global FLW accounted for 8 to 10 percent of total anthropogenic GHG emissions ([IPCC, 2019](#)).
- Biodiversity loss continues to accelerate across the globe. Today, more than ever before in human history, around one million animal and plant species are threatened with extinction, many within decades ([IPBES, 2019](#)).
- FAO's estimates reported in 2022 set the Global Food Loss Percentage at 13.3 percent ([FAO, 2022](#)).
- Fruits and vegetables account for approximately 32 percent of food losses, followed by meat and animal products that account for 12.4 percent of food losses ([FAO, 2022](#)).
- On average, each of us produces 74 kg of food waste each year – this weighs more than the average person ([UNEP, 2021](#)).

# KEY MESSAGES



- Reducing food loss and food waste must be central to the transformation to MORE efficient, inclusive, sustainable and resilient agrifood systems for better production, better nutrition, a better environment, and a better life.
- Sustainably reducing food loss and food waste means we can potentially increase the availability of and access to food. This can generate win-wins across a number of SDGs, including nutrition targets, while contributing to environmental sustainability.
- Countries must take action to reduce food loss and food waste. Profound change in the prevention and reduction of food loss and waste can only take place when countries develop and allocate sufficient human, organizational and institutional capacity to tackle the issues.
- Reliable data is critical to informing actions to reduce food loss and food waste, assessing GHG emissions across agrifood systems and increasing supply chain efficiency toward transforming agrifood systems.
- New business models, such as mobile-based business-to-business supply platforms that embrace innovation can enhance the efficiency of agrifood systems, reduce food loss and food waste and contribute to accelerating transformative change.
- Investments in sound logistics and in climate friendly technologies to reduce food loss and food waste at scale are critical to catalysing the pace of agrifood systems transformation.
- Circular strategies that prioritize the prevention of food loss and food waste, followed by the recovery and redistribution of food, and the recapture of value from by-products generated at each stage of the value chain support transitioning to more sustainable agrifood systems.
- Cities play a key role in reducing food waste and are important game changers in the battle to reduce food waste.
- Enabling policies that prioritize sustainable production, food loss and food waste reduction and healthy diets for better nutrition, will go a long way to supporting transformative change and achieving the 2030 Agenda.
- Knowledge sharing on platforms, through communities of practice and education and awareness-raising campaigns can positively enhance the engagement of stakeholders and inform action.

## AREAS FOR ACTION

Reducing food loss and food waste is a shared responsibility. All stakeholders at all levels need to be involved: governments, the private sector, civil society, development agencies, research and academic institutions and consumers.

Collaboration is key – particularly between the public and private sectors, and with research and development institutions.

As consumers, we all have a role to play. Our collective efforts can make a difference.

## WHAT CAN GOVERNMENTS AND DECISION-MAKERS

### DO?

- Invest in national agriculture and food data systems and seek to engage with new sources of data and methods to generate relevant information to improve food loss and food waste, increase food security, healthy diets and transform agrifood systems.
  - Measure and report on SDG 12.3 using the Food Loss Index and the Food Waste Index.
  - Raise climate ambition by integrating food loss and food waste in Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to the Paris Agreement.
- Commit to working toward transforming national agrifood systems in favour of healthy diets

and sustainable agrifood systems that support the natural resource base, so as to achieve climate goals and deliver on the commitments represented by SDG 12.3.

- When drafting policies related to climate, biodiversity and trade, consider adopting those related to agrifood systems that prioritize aspects such as sustainable production, reduction of food loss and food waste and healthy diets.
- Develop or support public-private partnerships to tackle food loss and food waste across supply chains and in households, through for example, investing in infrastructural support development to support both food loss and food waste reduction.
- Work with local authorities to increase awareness of food loss and food waste among youth: include subjects related to food loss and food waste in school curricular.
- Implement programmes to encourage a change in consumer behaviour to help citizens reduce food waste at home.

## WHAT CAN PRIVATE ACTORS IN THE FOOD SUPPLY

### CHAIN DO?

- Invest in climate friendly research and innovation. Take action to apply and scale up successful innovations that sustainably reduce food loss and food waste across the agrifood system.
- Include green and social targets

as key performance indicators in company business models.

- Increase transparency and accountability by measuring and publicly reporting on food loss and food waste.
- Pilot and scale interventions to help supply chain stakeholders and consumers to reduce food loss and food waste.
- Work with governments, businesses, public authorities, and local charities to implement food waste management plans, by using food waste management apps or by donating to charities.
- Engage in public-private partnerships – that could support training, infrastructure development and behaviour change programmes – to collaboratively tackle food loss and reduce food waste across supply chains and in households.

## WHAT ROLE CAN RESEARCH AND ACADEMIA

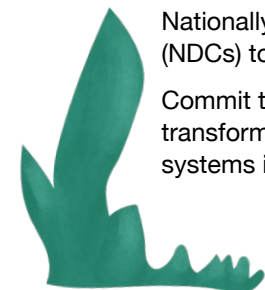
### PLAY?

- Help build the business case for reducing food loss and food waste by further quantifying the potential benefits for food security, healthy diets and the planet as well as potential trade-offs.
- Innovate in new and better ways to generate the data and evidence required to track and advance progress in reducing food loss and food waste and ensure that data collected is not biased.

- Conduct context appropriate research – to identify food loss and food waste hotspots and practical solutions – to reduce food loss and food waste in a sustainable manner.
- Conduct research and evaluations to identify the most effective interventions that effect a change in behaviour to reduce food waste in the household across different populations and in various contexts.
- Expand understanding of consumer behaviour and food waste: publish yearly reports on the advancement of food waste per category and ensure that data also relates to how food waste impacts consumers in their daily life.
- Work with science communicators to translate the latest research evidence on food loss and food waste for lay audiences, including facts/figures and graphics that promote understanding and share them on social media.
- Develop and implement training programmes to enhance the capacities of varying stakeholder groups to reduce food loss and food waste.

## CONSUMERS

- Raise awareness among your peers about the benefits to be derived from reducing food waste.
- For more tips on reducing food waste click [here](#).



# COMMUNICATIONS TOOLKIT

Here 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 2023 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

The [IDAFLW poster](#) can be downloaded from the IDAFLW 2023 Asset Bank. The standard measurement is 100 x 70 cm, both horizontal and vertical formats available.



## WEB BANNERS

IDAFLW 2023 web banners [Long top banner (920 x 350 pixels) and square sidebar (210 x 146 pixels) formats] are provided in the IDAFLW 2023 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. If you should wish to use the ribbon or distribute it to partners, send an email to [Food-Loss-Waste-Day@fao.org](mailto:Food-Loss-Waste-Day@fao.org)

## GADGETS

The IDAFLW 2023 Asset Bank provides graphics for the local printing or production of:

t-shirts, mugs, bags





# HOW TO PARTICIPATE



## ORGANIZE AN IDAFLW EVENT!

Take advantage of this important call to action. Consider a fresh approach, engage in different activities with a message about food loss and food waste: food tasting, cooking demonstrations (also with leftovers!) concerts, festivals, roundtables or public lectures.

## 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 FOOD WASTE REDUCTION ACTIVITIES

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

## RECREATION AND SPORT

Platforms, such as Skype and Zoom, are modes to organize online activities for exercise. Organize an online exercise class, such as aerobics, yoga or zumba, to promote awareness of food loss and food waste.

## USE THE IDAFLW VISUAL

- Download the IDAFLW web banners, share them and update your web page with them, linking them to the IDAFLW website.
- Produce a range of promotional materials – t-shirts, mugs and bags, using our free graphics.
- Use the IDAFLW visual as much as possible for events and activities and online!

## LET US KNOW ABOUT YOUR IDAFLW EVENT!

- There are many ways to observe and promote the IDAFLW. Tell us about your events or efforts.
- Send us your best photographs and videos of your event. We'll add them to the IDAFLW Flickr Album. Remember to credit all high-resolution photos and information about the event.

## SPREAD THE WORD

- Educate, and engage audiences with information about reducing food loss and waste.
- Join the campaign to promote #FLWDay. Share our free material on digital channels. Ask local and national digital influencers in the food sector (bloggers, celebrities, public figures, photographers, chefs and experts) to amplify our messages about #ReducingFoodLossAndWaste.
- Publish your photos, messages and video. Show us what you're doing to reduce food loss and waste!

## GET THE MEDIA INVOLVED

Spread the key messages! Take part 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 United Nations specialized agency leading international efforts to defeat hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition. FAO is mandated to raise levels of nutrition and reduce food loss and food waste, taking into account sustainable production and consumption practices. FAO works 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 stimulate actions to affect behaviour change to reduce food loss and waste.

FAO is committed to working together to promote ambitious collective action to reduce food loss and waste in support of achieving the 2030 Agenda. This will lead to 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 that support actions to reduce food loss and waste, toward meeting the SDG 12.3 target, contributing to food systems transformation and to achievement of the 2030 Agenda:

- The [Technical Platform on the Measurement and Reduction of Food loss and Waste](#) is a dynamic gateway to FAO's work in collaboration with a range of partners, to address food loss and waste prevention, reduction, measurement and policy.
- [FAO's Data Lab for statistical innovation](#) builds and maintains different databases that provide timely, real-time information from non-conventional sources to facilitate data analysis and evidence-based policymaking.
- The [FAO food loss and waste database](#) is the largest online collection of data on both food loss and waste and causes reported in scientific journals, academic publications, grey literature and countries among others.
- The [Food Loss Index and data collection methodology](#) developed by FAO, measures and monitors progress on SDG 12.3 at the national level.
- [FAO's Data Lab Trends](#) analyse the popularity of search queries related to food security and nutrition and agrifood system transformation, in the articles gathered from media outlets around the world and in various languages.
- An on-line [e-learning course on the FAO food loss analysis methodology and its application](#).
- An [educational package titled "do good: save food!"](#) by FAO and the International Food Waste Coalition covers food waste reduction. For children ages 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 presents the actions and measures for countries, partners and stakeholders to adopt so they can contribute to FLW reduction.



# UNEP'S RESOURCES ON FOOD WASTE REDUCTION



France ©Fédération Française des Banques Alimentaires/Cedric Doux



Austria ©Wiener Tafel\_Thomas Topf



Italy ©Fondazione Banco Alimentare ONLUS

The [United Nations Environment Programme \(UNEP\)](#) works on a number of different fronts to tackle food loss and waste. As the custodian of the indicator SDG 12.3b, UNEP co-hosts with FAO the International Day of Awareness on Food Loss and Waste on 29 September each year. Mandated by the United Nations Environment Assembly ([UNEA Resolution 4/2](#)), UNEP builds capacity and advocates for improved enabling conditions to halve food loss and waste.

- Supporting [SDG Target 12.3](#)
- As the custodian of the indicator SDG 12.3b, the [Food Waste Index](#), UNEP helps track country-level progress to halve global food waste at retail and consumer levels by 2030. Assisted by UNEP's Regional Working Groups on Food Waste, countries in each region can access technical expertise on measuring and reducing food waste, learn from the experiences of neighbouring countries, and develop mechanisms to track their country's progress on SDG 12.3.
- [Reducing Consumer Food Waste Using Green and Digital Technologies](#) provides an overview of the causes of consumer food waste and how it can be reduced by using technological solutions, behavioural change, and public and private initiatives.
- An educational package on food waste: "[Kitchen Lessons](#)", was developed by UNEP in collaboration with the Edible Schoolyard Project. For children ages 10 to 14.
- The [Global Methane Assessment](#) shows that human-caused methane emissions can be reduced by up to 45 percent this decade. Three behavioural changes have been identified that could reduce methane emissions by 65 to 80 tonnes/year over the next few decades. These three changes are reducing food waste and loss; improving livestock management; and adopting healthy diets.
- UNEP and FAO in 2022, collaborated in preparing the publication [Sustainable food cold chains: opportunities, challenges and the way forward](#), which states food cold chains are critical to meeting the challenge of feeding an additional two billion people by 2050; harnessing the resilience of rural communities, and preventing an increase greenhouse gas emissions.

## 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](mailto:Food-Loss-Waste-Day@fao.org)

[www.fao.org/international-day-awareness-food-loss-waste](http://www.fao.org/international-day-awareness-food-loss-waste)  
[www.unep.org/events/un-day/idaflw](http://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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