

REGIONAL COVID-19 WEBINAR SERIES

FOOD WASTE PREVENTION AND REDUCTION IN THE TIMES OF CRISIS

11 November 2020

10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. CET

BACKGROUND

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the fragility and weaknesses of our food systems and launched a global wake-up call on the need to address disruptions in the production / harvest / distribution of food with special attention to the prevention of food losses and waste (FLW).

Disruptions in supply chains resulting from blockages on transport routes, transport restrictions and quarantine measures are resulting in significant increases in food loss and waste, especially of perishable agricultural produce. In addition, labour shortages, owing to the restriction of movement of key stakeholders in production and transport, are significantly impacting food supply and demand due to food shortages in some markets, further contributing to food loss and to the unnecessary waste of food supplies in these difficult times.

The effort to feed the growing number of those affected financially by the COVID-19 pandemic response measures by recovering and redistributing surplus food supplies, which would otherwise be lost or wasted, are hampered by the difficulty in obtaining the food donations. Civil society organizations work with the private sector actors – from production to food services – to respond to an increasing demand from low- or no-income consumers for food assistance.

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 low-income countries – we are once more reminded of the need to place emphasis on assuring food availability and access, especially for the most vulnerable.

Concerted multi-actor actions are required globally to maximize the use of food that is produced, and to bolster efforts to reduce food loss and waste.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) encourages countries to adopt holistic approaches to tackle food loss and waste reduction, in an effort to facilitate access to food for all and particularly for vulnerable groups during the COVID-19 pandemic. Some strategic measures and interventions to reduce food loss in traditional food supply chains are available [here](#).

OBJECTIVE

Mitigating the severe impacts of COVID-19 pandemic and the response measures will require *collaborative* and *innovative* approaches.

With little data available on the implications of the COVID-19 on the food system, the webinar will bring together experts from different sectors to share their first-hand experience and discuss solutions and practices that may be adopted to prevent and reduce food waste at different stages of the food value chains in this unprecedented situation.

In this regard, the webinar will focus on two areas of action to prevent and reduce food waste:

- Facilitation of access to food for food insecure and vulnerable groups
- Development and adoption of innovative solutions to minimize critical food loss and waste points

FORMAT

The 90 minutes webinar will comprise three sections: presentations by key speakers, panel discussion, and a Q&A session.

During the second section a moderator will ask the panel participants to respond to a series of (pre-canned) questions. This would set the ground for a discussion and further the audience to send their questions (in a chat box) that will be addressed during the Q&A session.

SPEAKERS

The speakers and participants of the panel discussion will comprise the representatives of public and private sectors, as well as non-governmental organizations, thereby allowing to address the issue of food waste at different levels and from different points of view.

AGENDA

Time	Type/ Topic	Speaker
5''	Welcoming remarks and introduction to the topic	Robert van Otterdijk, Agro-Industry Officer, FAO in Europe and Central Asia
10''	"European Food Banks today: commitment, creativity, and openness to change"	Angela Frigo, Secretary General, European Food Banks Federation (FEBA)
10''	"Saving invisible food - FeedUP@UN"	Liliana Annovazzi-Jakab, Head of Agricultural Quality Standards Unit, Economic Cooperation and Trade Division, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)
10''	"Reducing food loss and waste in supply chains – the role of collaboration"	Liz Goodwin, Senior Fellow and Director, Food Loss and Waste, World Resources Institute (WRI)
25''	Panel discussion	Participants: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Public sector:</i> Ellen Oetelmans, Program Manager of Amsterdam

		<p>Impact, a City of Amsterdam initiative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Private sector:</i> Yana Synesiou, Sustainable Development Director, X5 Retail Group, Russia • Balázs Cseh, President, Hungarian Food Bank Association
25''	Q&A	
5''	Closing remarks	Robert van Otterdijk, FAO REU