



FOOD LOSS AND WASTE REDUCTION

MAIN TOPICS

- Post-harvest handling
- Value-added processing and preservation
- Logistics and cold chains
- Food loss and waste reduction

CURRENT ISSUES

A **substantial proportion of the food** produced for human consumption is lost through decreases in its quantity or quality, or wasted through being discarded when still fit for consumption.

Food losses and waste have negative impacts on the environment, natural resource sustainability, and food and nutrition security. They also represent a loss of economic value for actors in the food supply chain.

Value addition through processing and preservation is one of the avenues for reducing food loss and mitigating its negative effects.

A wide range of **challenges limit value addition by small and medium agro-industries** in developing countries. These include lack of adequate infrastructure, logistics and cold chain systems, which are crucial for avoiding losses of highly perishable products such as fish, fruits, milk and meat.

ACTION AND PLANS

- **Conducting case studies** to analyse the extent and causes of food losses and to identify solutions that are economically, socially and environmentally suitable.
- **Preparing and disseminating information** materials to raise awareness on the problem of food losses and waste.
- **Providing support and guidance** for the formulation and implementation of national and regional strategies and programmes to reduce food losses and waste.
- **Developing technical knowledge and building capacity** in post-harvest handling, value-added processing and preservation, logistics systems and cold chains, targeting smallholder farmers and small and medium enterprises.
- **Appraising** the status, constraints and successful models of logistics and cold chain systems, and preparing policy guidance on their development.



The Save Food Initiative (2011–present)

The Save Food Initiative has four pillars: raising awareness; facilitating collaboration and coordination; developing policies, strategies and programmes; and supporting investments. Underpinning these efforts, case studies in food supply chains are carried out to identify the levels of losses and define feasible solutions for reducing them. In 2012 and 2013, the banana, dairy, fish and maize supply chains in Kenya were studied. The Save Food Network has more than 250 partners from the private sector and non-governmental and international organizations. In May 2014, network members met in Düsseldorf, Germany, to share experiences and innovative solutions for addressing food losses and waste.

National capacity building through training of trainers (2012–2014)

Capacity building and training materials on grain, fruit, vegetable and dairy processing are pilot-tested with groups of trainers in member countries. Courses provide updates on new opportunities for small and medium enterprises such as solar drying or transformation of produce into jam and other products. Recent courses have been held in Angola in 2013 and 2014, El Salvador in 2012, Nicaragua in 2014 and Oman in 2012; local governments normally mobilize funding for the initial training and dissemination of the information transferred.

The training materials are being gathered into a comprehensive e-learning package for use worldwide.



Appraisals of logistics and cold chains (2011–present)

In 2011 and 2012, logistics systems for the agrifood industry were appraised in Cameroon, Ghana, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania in Africa, and Chile, Colombia, Guatemala, Honduras and Panama in Latin America. Furthermore, cold chain systems were studied in selected sub-Saharan countries and, in 2012, a workshop was organized to identify the elements of a strategic programme for addressing constraints. Further studies of logistics and cold chains are planned in Southeast Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean. The results will inform the development of policy guidance and intervention strategies.

References

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