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## **G7 ALLIANCE ON RESOURCE EFFICIENCY**

# **Strategies to tackle household food waste: The Italian experience**

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# OVERVIEW

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Key factor: consumers perception and awareness for behavioral change

Key barrier: information gap on household food loss and waste



# Consumer awareness - Diaries and questionnaires

**REDUCE - 2015 Bologna University** Project financed by the Italian Ministry for Ecological Transition which aimed, among others, to study determinants of **consumers behavior** through the use of reliable methods (afterwards embedded in the EU revision of waste framework directive in 2018).

- Household food waste was analyzed through food diaries and questionnaires;
- A post-hoc analysis, aimed at detecting relations between values, attitudes, awareness and actual behavior was run;
- Most important result: the big persistence of a cognitive bias influencing the issue, namely participants to the study declare not to waste at all or to waste up to 200 g per week per family while the average food waste value, per person, is above 1kg;
- Food waste behaviors were analyzed with the support of psychologists;
- A new diary survey has started in September 2020, supported by ISPRA (National Institute for Environmental Research).





# Consumer awareness - Diaries and questionnaires

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*Comprehensive Measurement of Italian Domestic Food Waste in a European Framework, CREA Council for Agricultural Research and Economics, Research Center for Food and Nutrition, 2018*

- survey involving a representative sample of 1142 Italian households
- Average amount of food wasted per category is reported.
- Focus on sociodemographic characteristics and their association with food waste
- A cross-country comparison, as carried out in this study, advanced the knowledge and understanding of Italian situations versus other European contexts, leading to a number of relevant findings.
- evidence of the need to promote the value of food and work to shift social norms so that wasting food is no longer socially acceptable, especially **targeting youth**.
- Linking food waste to sustainable diet considerations could provide new reasons for citizens to engage in a positive response, at least in younger generations.
- Cooperation among institutions, producers, and retailers could further support preventive actions to raise awareness of the food management issues considered in this study
- food waste needs to be considered in relation to the **country's cultural context**
- food consumption patterns, food behavior, consumer knowledge, practices, and attitudes are all interrelated, could impact at different levels on food waste, and should be taken into account when establishing preventive actions.



# Consumer awareness

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- National institutional **communication campaigns** on food recovery and waste reduction;
- The campaign “*Spreco Zero*” is a campaign that promotes awareness about food waste and sustainable behaviors to challenge it, and its target is the wide public. Short videos and press material are shared on the main national broadcast channels;
- “*Premio vivere a spreco zero*” is a national contest, where the best initiatives against food waste are shared and rewarded;
- In 2014 was launched the national food waste prevention day, where also the Public Information Service plans a dedicated program with the aim of raising public awareness on the phenomenon of food waste;
- Charters, protocols and pacts against food waste have been signed;
- There are various interesting apps to combat food waste that for example allow traders and restaurants to put unsold food on sale at reduced prices at the end of the day as it is close to expiry or with aesthetic defects, but still perfectly suitable for consumption, and consumers to buy at advantageous prices with benefits for both parties.



# ...back to school..

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- Through the work of the REDUCE project, a kit for education in primary schools was designed and donated to schools. The REDUCE toolkit aims to promote a deep cultural change among final consumers and especially among the youngest, teaching them the value of food from the first years of school and raising awareness on the problem of food waste and on the need to prevent and reduce it. The kit has been developed to be easily integrated with the contents foreseen in the existing school modules and it can be adapted to specific needs of the class.
- Different actors at a decentralized level (municipalities, associations), built their school kits against food waste. In 2018, a formal agreement between the ministry for Ecological Transition and the National Association of Italian Municipalities (ANCI) was signed. One of the activities was *“training for school teachers”*. The repository was just recently published online and it is expected to grow in the next months, by including all the existing projects currently being run in Italy.
- The Italian law n.92 of 20 August 2019 foresees the introduction of a new model of civic education as a mandatory module in the Italian school system. One of the topics to be addressed within the module is the Agenda 2030 of the United Nations. Being food waste part of the Agenda 2030 (SDG 12.3), it is also perfectly fitting the new module on civic education.





## G7 Alliance RE towards G20 Dialogue RE

- Food waste prevention: from the start (school)
- Youth engagement to drive the behavioural change
- Young G20 «leftovers chef»
- Cultural/gastronomic traditions + creativity and innovation: inter-generational brigade to reverse unsustainable patterns





THANKS FOR YOUR KIND ATTENTION

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