



18.05.2016 - Food loss and waste is a global social, economic and environmental issue. Each year one third of global food production for human consumption never finds its way onto plates and is lost or wasted. This is equivalent to 1.3 billion tonnes of edible food.

It is estimated that in developing countries, 40% of losses occur during harvest and processing level. In industrialised countries, the same percentage of waste happens at the retail or consumer level. The scale of food waste is eye-watering.

To put things into perspective, if one fourth of the food currently lost or wasted is instead saved, there would be enough food to feed 870 million hungry people. The amount of safe and nutritious food lost or wasted in Europe alone could feed 200 million people.

This vast wastage of food also has an environmental impact. According to the United Nations Environmental Programme ([UNEP](#)), 1.4bn hectares of land is used to create food that is ultimately lost or wasted every year, that is an area equivalent to the size of China. The volume of water used to produce lost or wasted food is equivalent to three times the volume of Lake Geneva.

Cutting food loss and waste therefore plays a part in reducing poverty and hunger, and fights climate change. The #NotWasting Food campaign highlight the impacts of food waste on all levels and furthers [Sustainable Development Goal 12](#) – to ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.

Join the [#Notwasting](#) Food campaign on social media and make #NotWasting your way of life.

Whether you tend to fill your plate with more food than you need or pick only the perfectly shaped vegetable from the pile, you can make a big difference by changing your food habits a little, here are a few ideas to reduce food wastage:

- Remember: The 'Best Before date' doesn't mean 'Throw Away After', however the product quality might be inferior
- Shop and buy locally to keep food from travelling unnecessary miles
- Buy 'ugly' fruit and vegetables. 44% of global food loss and waste is made of fruits and vegetables. We tend to go for the most beautiful one in the pile but ugly food tastes just as good!

UNRICs Related Links

- [UNEP](#)
- [World Food Programme](#)
- [Sustainable Development Goals](#)

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