



If the global [food waste was a country](#) , it would be the third largest emitter of greenhouse gases in the world after China and the United States.

According to a [report](#) from the UN Food and Agricultural Organization ( [FAO](#) ), a third of the food we produce is wasted.

Households in the UK generate 4.2 million tonnes of avoidable [food waste](#) every year, and figures spike during Christmas. The result is that a fortune ends up in the bin, for example the UK collectively wasted £64 million-worth of food throughout Christmas 2014.

Behind these figures lies a food waste culture that has huge humanitarian, environmental and economic consequences – and in fact, if you seized just half of all the food that goes to waste from farm to fork, [no one would have to go to bed hungry](#) .

The good news is that an increasing number of initiatives to fight food waste are seeing the light of day around Europe.

In France, parliament actually [adopted legislation](#) earlier this year that prohibits large supermarkets from wasting their left over food. Instead, it has to be donated to charities.

However, the big retailers are only one side of the coin when it comes to generating food waste. During the holiday season, it's mostly domestic households that could use a tip or two - which will save them money and do the environment a favour.

In Denmark, celebrities have long since joined the anti-food waste movement. This year, the well-known Danish TV chef Louise Lorang, who is also the ambassador of Denmark's largest voluntary organization against food waste, 'Stop Wasting Food' ('[Stop Spild Af Mad](#)'), will go to [war against food waste at Christmas](#)

. "Be sure to use the leftovers and be creative when doing so!", she says. "Leftovers do not have to be boring!"

### UNRIC's tips for reducing food waste

- Make a plan. Do a shopping list, and stick to it;
- Do not put too much food on the table at a time – fill up instead, this will prolong the life of the food that has not been on the table;
- Understand the difference between best-before dates and use-by dates so you're not throwing away edible food;
- Eat potluck, perhaps on the day after Christmas – it helps the host and then guests can bring leftovers to share;
- Make a food schedule – just like in the weekdays, and decide on what you eat first, so you do not end up throwing food away;
- Place all items that are open or have an imminent expiration date at the front of the refrigerator, so you can get an overview of what you will eat and when.

### Related links:

## Christmas food waste: Leftovers don't have to be boring!

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- [UNRIC info point backgrounder on food waste](#)
- [UNEP's Think.Eat.Save campaign](#)