

#EUCircularTalks

Resource efficiency to help combat food waste



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# WHY THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY DEMANDS EU FOOD WASTE REGULATION

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## › When there's no waste, there's a way (to net zero)

A call for policy for food waste prevention

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Food is a climate issue: food waste is both a hidden barrier and an untapped opportunity to help reach net zero UK emissions. Addressing food waste is a 'no regrets' policy option.
- Halving UK food waste and reforesting liberated domestic grassland could deliver roughly 4% of the emissions cuts the UK needs to reach net zero\* - plus contribute significantly to reducing the overseas emissions and land use from UK imports.
- While there have been some reductions in food waste through voluntary initiatives, the UK is not currently on track to halve food waste in line with an ambitious interpretation of SDG 12.3, and progress must accelerate: regulatory intervention will be necessary to realise the potential of food waste as a climate solution including binding targets and incorporating food waste reduction into climate change action frameworks, as well as into land use, agriculture and other policies.
- There is and has always been public support for government regulatory action on food waste. Addressing food waste from farm to fork, including in households, as part of an ambitious food and agriculture-focused climate policy is an opportunity for the UK to lead an international agenda to mitigate the environmental impacts of our food system.

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## GREEN GAS WITHOUT THE HOT AIR

Defining the true role of biogas in a net zero future



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## FARMERS TALK FOOD WASTE

Supermarkets' role in crop waste on UK farms

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## FEEDING SURPLUS FOOD TO PIGS SAFELY

A win-win for farmers and the environment

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## CAUSES OF FOOD WASTE IN INTERNATIONAL SUPPLY CHAINS

A REPORT BY FEEDBACK FUNDED BY THE ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION

**An estimated**

**40%**

**of the world's food  
is wasted**







- Enough to feed everyone currently food insecure plus everyone expected on the planet by 2050
- Causes about 8-10% of total anthropogenic GHG emissions
- Uses land equivalent to China and India combined — which could be rewilded to restore biodiversity and mitigate climate change, and used to feed the world sustainably

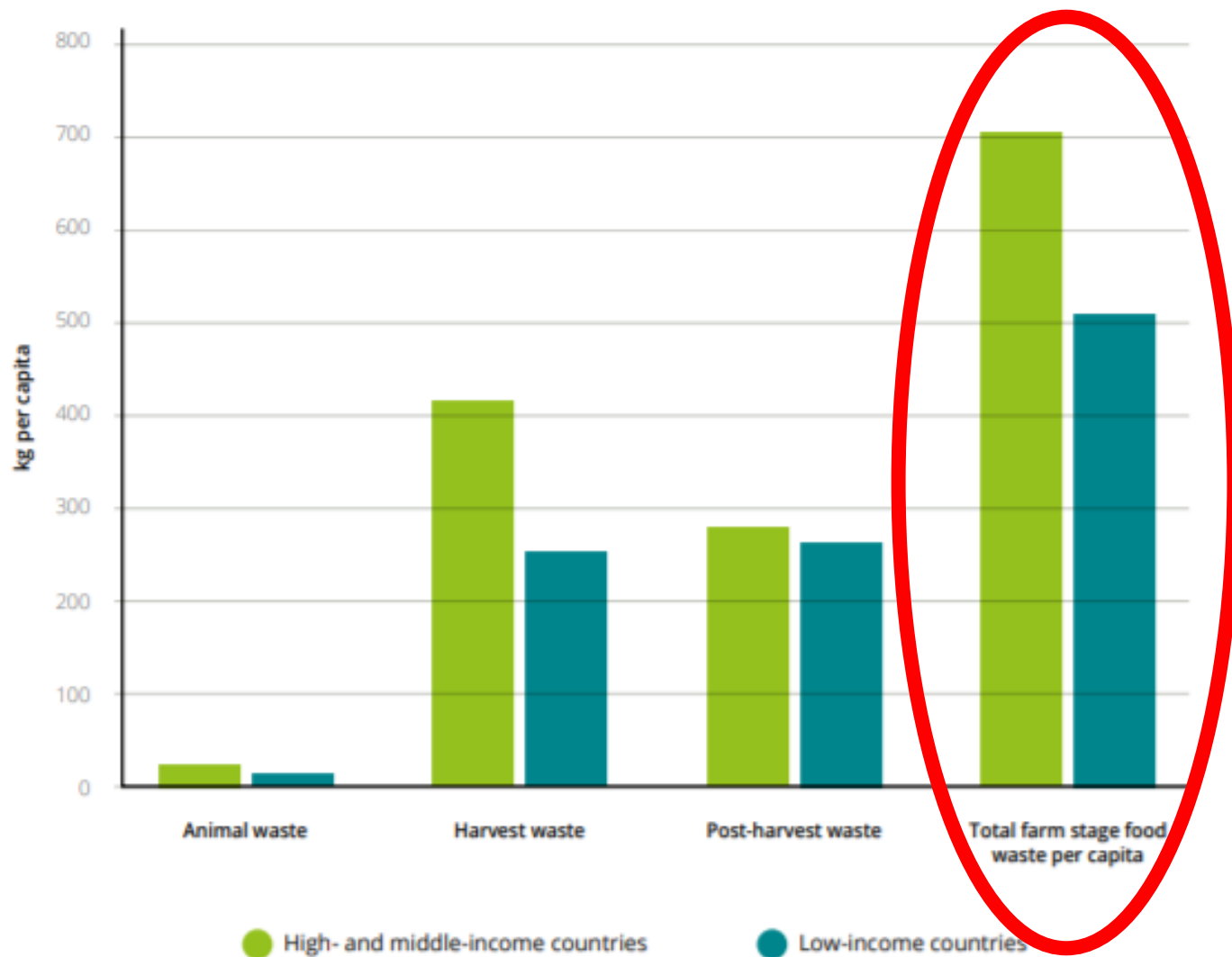


## FOOD WASTE INDEX REPORT 2021

**Table 1:** Average food waste (kg/capita/year) by World Bank income classification, averaging medium and high confidence estimates for countries

Income group	Average food waste (kg/capita/year)		
	Household	Food service	Retail
High-income countries	79	26	13
Upper middle-income countries	76	Insufficient data	
Lower middle-income countries	91	Insufficient data	
Low-income countries	Insufficient data		

<sup>1</sup> The apparent discrepancy between the sum of the percentages for each sector and the total is due to rounding.



**Figure 3**

Per capita farm stage food waste by region (kg/year)



### 58% OF GLOBAL HARVEST STAGE WASTE

occurs in the high -and middle-income countries of Europe, North America and Industrialised Asia<sup>1</sup> – despite these countries having higher on-farm mechanisation and only 37% of the global population.



**MEASURE PRIMARY  
PRODUCTION FOOD WASTE**

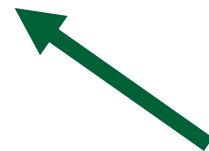
**COMMISSION DELEGATED DECISION (EU) 2019/1597**

**of 3 May 2019**

**supplementing Directive 2008/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards a common methodology and minimum quality requirements for the uniform measurement of levels of food waste**

**(Text with EEA relevance)**

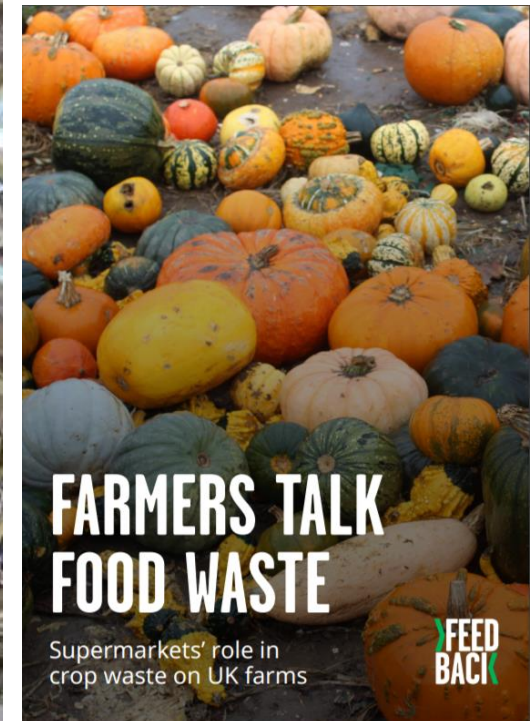
- (3) Food waste does not include losses at stages of the food supply chain where certain products have not yet become food as defined in Article 2 of Regulation (EC) No 178/2002, such as edible plants which have not been harvested. In addition, it



**Excludes majority of primary production food waste – including unharvested food, food ploughed back into field after harvest, and livestock mortalities.**



UK farmer had to waste about 25% of their carrots due to cosmetic rejections – nearly 22 million portions/year



**FARMERS TALK  
FOOD WASTE**

Supermarkets' role in  
crop waste on UK farms

**FEED  
BACI**

“

*From my experience, when I used to supply the supermarkets you generally grew about a third more than you thought you would sell, just to make sure that the supermarket buyer didn't have a tantrum if you ran short, and so routinely you have more than you can sell and so you just mow it off and plough it in – that's the normal thing to do.*

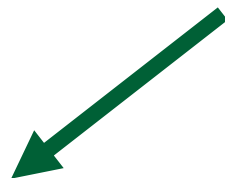
”

Guy Singh-Watson, Riverford Organic





Mortality rates of broiler chickens in USA, Canada and Oceania are 4.9% - resulting in 637,000 tonnes of meat waste per year, linked to welfare issues of intensive livestock farming



## GUIDANCE ON INTERPRETING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL TARGET 12.3

12 RESPONSIBLE  
CONSUMPTION  
AND PRODUCTION



1. **What sectors are covered?** One should interpret Target 12.3 as covering the *entire* food supply chain, from the point that crops and livestock are ready for harvest or slaughter through to the point that they are ready to be ingested by people (Figure 1). Entities should seek to reduce





## DRIVEN TO WASTE: THE GLOBAL IMPACT OF FOOD LOSS AND WASTE ON FARMS



**1.2 BILLION TONNES OF FOOD**, is wasted on farms each year – the weight of 10 million blue whales. This is significantly more than the 931 million tonnes wasted from retail, food service and households<sup>i</sup> and enough to feed to the world's 870 million undernourished four times over.



**2.2 GIGATONNES CO<sub>2</sub>eq** is the overall carbon footprint of farm stage food waste – approximately 4% of all anthropogenic greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and 16% of agricultural emissions. This is equivalent to the emissions from 75% of all cars driven in the US and Europe over a year.



**4.4 MILLION KM<sup>2</sup> OF LAND** is used to grow food which is lost on farms each year – larger than the Indian subcontinent. This area of land could contribute significantly to rewilding efforts.



## Estimates of European food waste levels

**Table 1: Estimates of food waste in EU-28 in 2012 from this quantification study; includes food and inedible parts associated with food.**

Sector	Food waste (million tonnes) with 95% CI*	Food waste (kg per person) with 95% CI*
Primary production	9.1 ± 1.5	18 ± 3
Processing	16.9 ± 12.7	33 ± 25
Wholesale and retail	4.6 ± 1.2	9 ± 2
Food service	10.5 ± 1.5	21 ± 3
Households	46.5 ± 4.4	92 ± 9
<b>Total food waste</b>	<b>87.6 ± 13.7</b>	<b>173 ± 27</b>

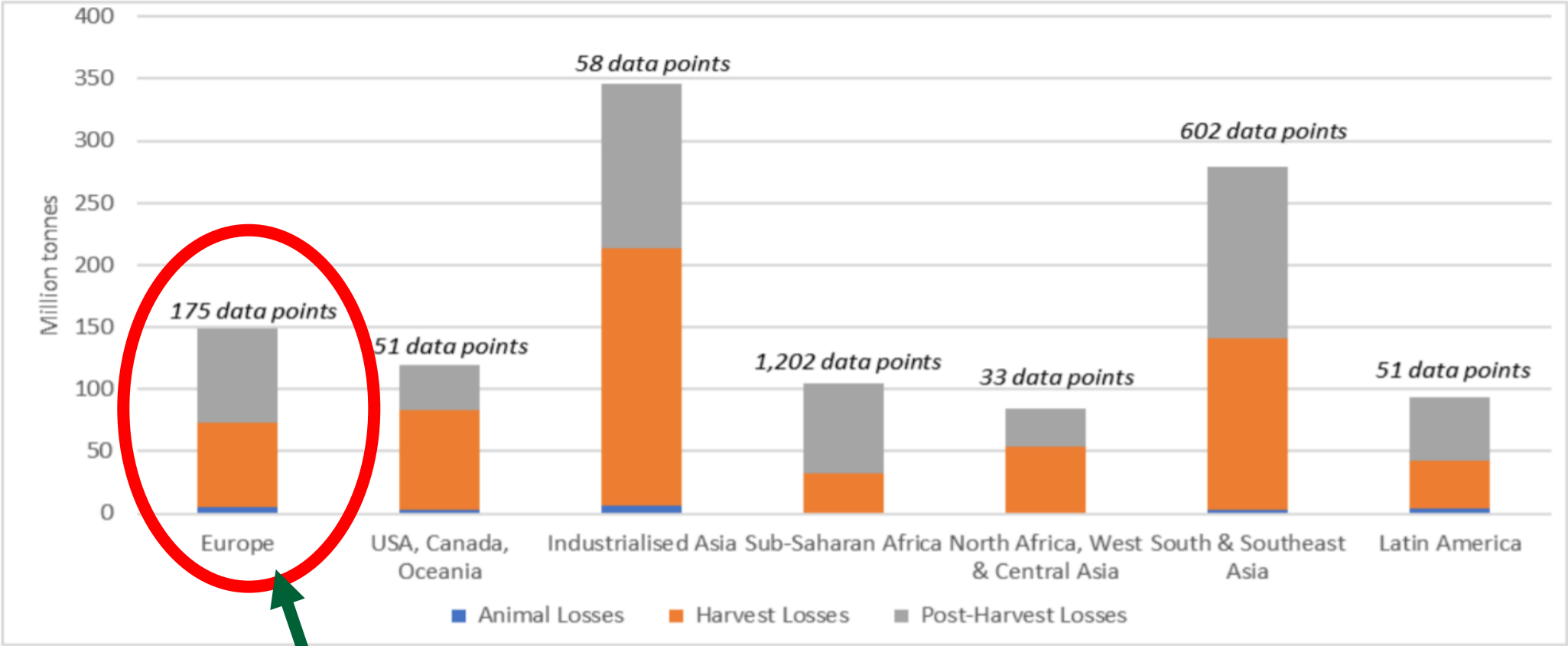
\*Confidence interval

**9 million tonnes food wasted at primary production in EU, based on only 6 studies pre-2016**





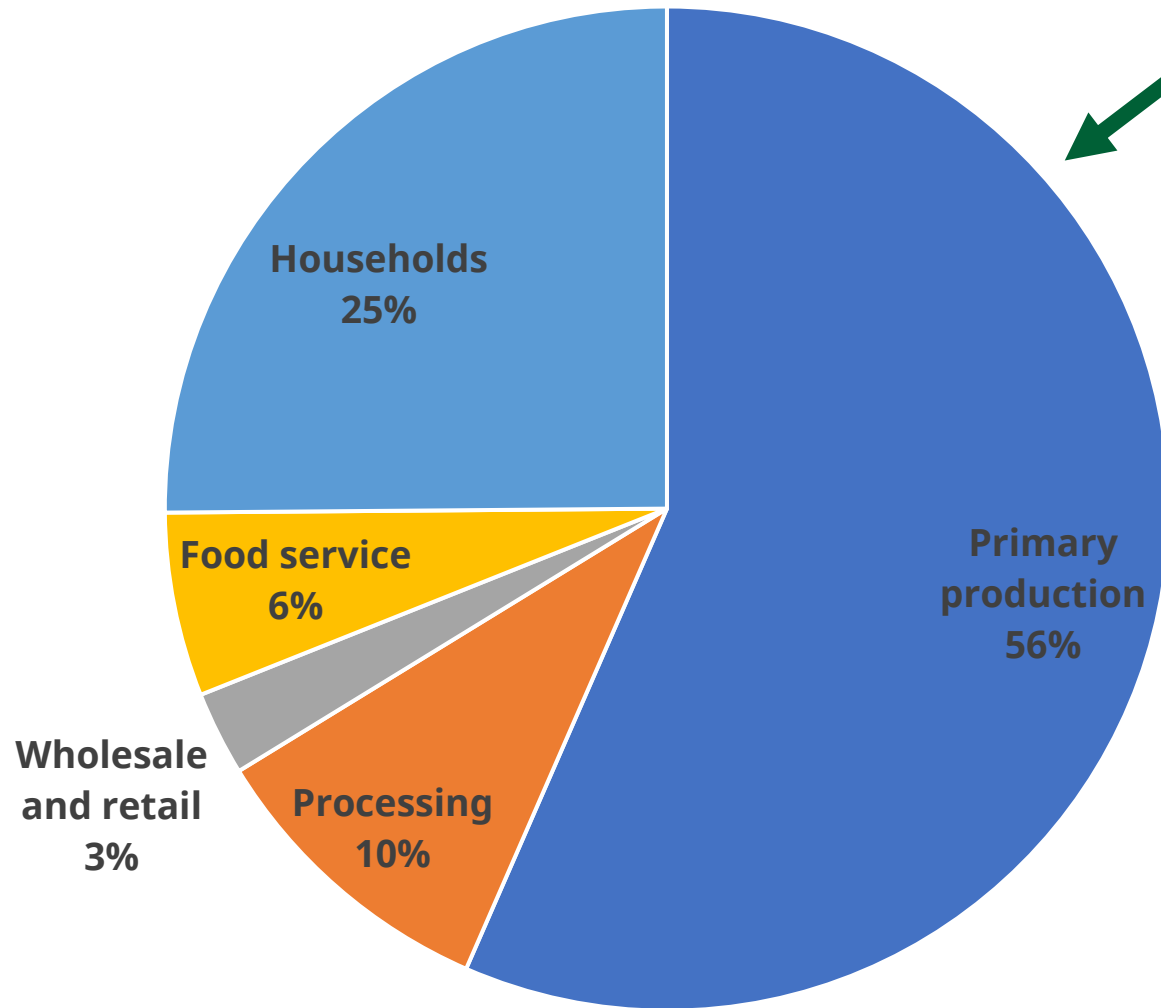
Figure 3: Food losses by stage and region (million tonnes) and indication of number



**150 million tonnes food wasted at primary production in Europe, based on 175 of the most up-to-date studies in 2021**



## Total food wasted in EU, consistent with WWF's findings (excluding UK post-Brexit)



Assuming roughly 90 million tonnes food wasted at primary production in EU\* (10 times higher than previous estimate):

- Over 50% of the EU's food loss and waste may currently be outside of the scope of mandatory measurement (most primary production food waste is unharvested, ploughed back in or livestock mortalities).

\*Assumes that since EU has roughly 60% of Europe's population, roughly 60% of Europe's 150 million tonnes primary production FLW occurs in the EU = 89.8 million tonnes. This is probably a generous assumption. Removed UK food waste from previous FUSIONS figures for other supply chain stages to be consistent post-Brexit.



# **LEGALLY BINDING FOOD WASTE TARGETS AT MEMBER STATE LEVEL**

Law

# Food waste – reduction targets

[Have your say](#) > [Published initiatives](#) > Food waste – reduction targets

## In preparation

## Roadmap

Feedback period

01 October 2021 - 29 October 2021

FEEDBACK: OPEN

UPCOMING

## Public consultation

Planned for

Fourth quarter 2021

FEEDBACK: UPCOMING

## About this initiative

### Summary

Food waste depletes our natural resources and generates greenhouse gas emissions.

This flagship initiative, which is part of the EU's farm to fork strategy, aims to propose legally binding targets to reduce food waste.

These targets will help limit the food supply chain's impact on the environment and climate and ensure more food is available for human consumption, thereby creating a more sustainable food system.

### Topic

Food safety

### Type of act

Proposal for a directive

## Roadmap

FEEDBACK: OPEN



**50% REDUCTION REQUIRED FARM TO FORK —  
NOT JUST AT RETAIL & CONSUMER LEVELS**



**12.3** By 2030, halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses

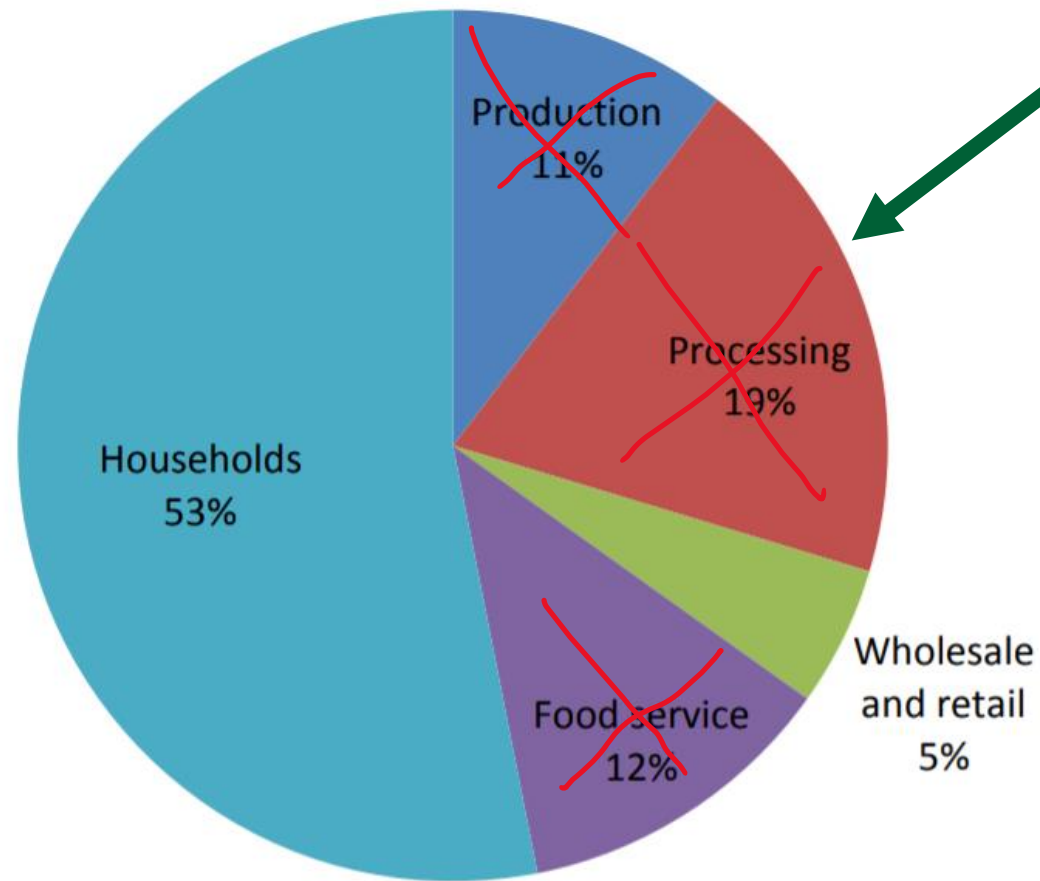
CHAMPIONS  12.3

GUIDANCE ON INTERPRETING  
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL TARGET 12.3



- 2. What is the target for food losses?** If the world is to fully realize the economic, food security, and environmental benefits of reducing food loss and waste, one should apply the “halve per capita” in practice to food losses, as well, not just to food waste. Not having a quantitative target on the food loss portion risks reducing both ambition and focus on an issue (food losses) that is important for many regions of the world.



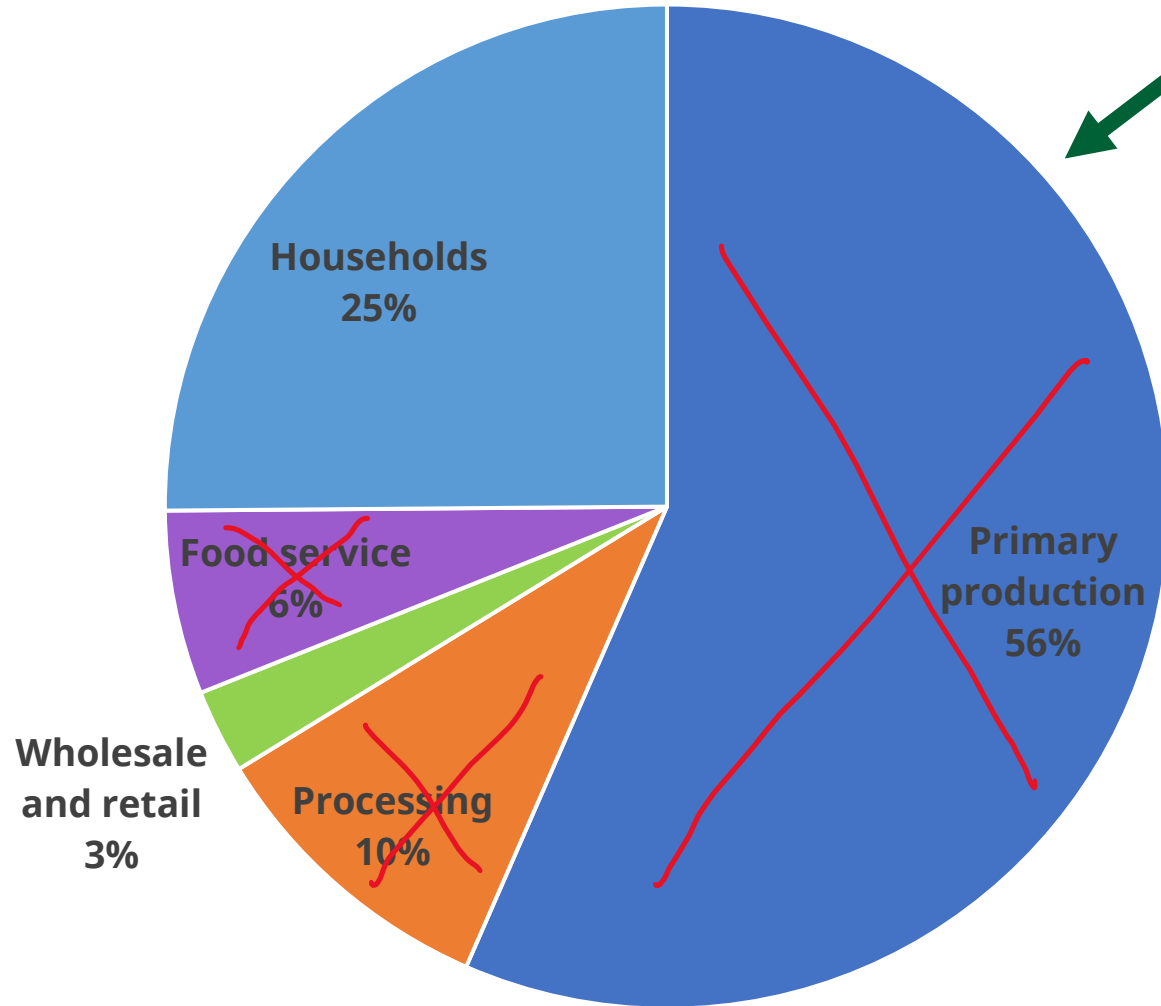


Even based on FUSIONS out-of-date under-estimates of primary production food waste:

- If the EU only sets a 50% reduction target for retail and consumer level food waste, it will exclude 42% of the EU's food loss and waste from its reduction targets
- Would unfairly target consumers and let almost all businesses off the hook
- Many businesses waste more in a day than a consumer does in a year – this concentration of waste makes potential mitigation easier.

*Figure 1: Split of EU-28 food waste in 2012 by sector; includes food and inedible parts associated with food.*

## Total food wasted in EU, consistent with WWF's findings (excluding UK post-Brexit)



In line with more accurate WWF primary production figures\*:

- If the EU only sets a 50% reduction target for retail and consumer level food waste, it will exclude 72% of the EU's food loss and waste from its reduction targets

\*Assumes that since EU has roughly 60% of Europe's population, roughly 60% of Europe's 150 million tonnes primary production food waste occurs in the EU = 89.8 million tonnes. This is probably a generous assumption. Removed UK food waste from previous FUSIONS figures for other supply chain stages to be consistent post-Brexit.





## Statement on food waste in Waste Framework Directive 2008/98/EC

We, the undersigned, support the below proposals, and call on the European Parliament, Council and Commission to support these proposals for a more ambitious Circular Economy Package (CEP):

- 1) The CEP to introduce a clear definition of food waste which includes food wasted at the level of primary production, and develop a methodology for measuring it by 31 December 2017. A clear timeline be introduced to measure and baseline food waste farm-to-fork by 2020.
- 2) The CEP to establish a specific food waste hierarchy, rather than relying on a generic waste hierarchy
- 3) The CEP food waste reduction target of 50% by 2030 to be specified as farm-to-fork. This means that it should include not just retailer and consumer food waste, but also food wasted at the primary production, manufacturing and distribution levels.
- 4) The CEP food waste reduction target of 50% by 2030 to be binding at Member State level rather than a voluntary aim.





Deutsche Umwelthilfe



**DNR**  
DEUTSCHER  
NATURSCHUTZRING







# Let's cut Europe and the UK's food waste in half!



I've joined with campaigners, businesses and environmental groups around Europe to call for:

- A binding target to cut EU food waste by 50% by 2030, from farm to fork.

70,078 have signed. Let's get to 75,000!



At 75,000 signatures, this petition becomes one of the **top signed on Change.org!**



Lauren bunting signed this petition



Rodolfo Furtado signed this petition



I'm signing because... (optional)

## Statement in 2020 signed by 10 European organisations



CC: Commissioner Wojciechowski, Commissioner Sinkevičius, Commissioner Gabriel

**Subject: EC commitment on tackling food waste in the Farm to Fork Strategy**

8 July 2020

To overcome these challenges, we would like to **share several recommendations** to enlarge the scope and enhance the effectiveness of the EU's work on food waste. In particular, we urge the European Commission to:

1. Put forward binding targets committing to a 50% reduction by 2030 of all food waste from farm to fork, and bring forward the proposal of binding targets on food waste to the whole supply chain as early as possible, ideally to 2022.



**HOW CAN MEMBER STATES ACHIEVE  
50% FOOD WASTE REDUCTION TARGETS  
THROUGH REGULATION?**



# UK CASE STUDY — LIMITS OF VOLUNTARY ACTION:

- Despite sustained public pressure, 10 years since the first voluntary commitments, only 60 companies are reporting their food waste publicly
- Food waste reduction of only 1% per year has been achieved in the retail/manufacturing/catering sectors combined (0.22 million tonnes in total)
- Participation is still patchy – particularly low in the catering & primary production sectors
- No measureable reductions have been achieved in primary production food waste. More food & surplus occurs at primary production than in retail/manufacturing/catering sectors combined – an estimated 3.6 million tonnes.

# REGULATORY OPTIONS FOR MEMBER STATES:

- **Introduce mandatory food waste reporting for food businesses over a certain size, to be reported publicly at individual business level**
- **Introduce mandatory participation in food waste reduction agreements and reduction targets for businesses over a certain size, to ensure participation**
- **Ban food waste going to landfill and incineration, through mandatory separate food waste collections and increased landfill and incineration taxes**
- **Introduce explicit food waste focus in Unfair Trading Practices legislation – such as preventing unfair cosmetic rejections, last-minute order cancellations, and delisting in cases of under-supply (avoiding systemic overproduction)**
- **Promote fairer contracts based on hectarage and/or whole crop purchasing.**
- **Charge supermarkets a levy based on how much food wasted in their supply chains, to fund food waste prevention efforts**



# UK will miss SDG on food waste unless mandatory reporting is introduced

24 September 2019

Publishing food waste data is vital and must be mandatory if the UK is to achieve SDG 12.3 to halve food waste by 2030. The Government has indicated it will introduce mandatory reporting and we call on them to do this urgently.”



# Talks on mandatory food waste reporting 'active' again after coronavirus pause

By Ian Quinn | 30 September 2020 | 3 min read



The talks come almost two years after plans were first set out to make reporting mandatory in the UK

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MOST COMMENTED



Pick for Britain scheme for UK-based farm workers scrapped



Asda ready to slash range by up to 40% in End2End reset



Asda ends in-store scratch baking putting 1,200 jobs at risk



M&S sues Aldi over Cuthbert the Caterpillar cake's similarities to Colin



Aldi launches 'packaging-free' trial with household staples in dispensers

“What we’re saying and what Defra is saying is you’ve got all this fantastic help available, you’ve got all your peers showing what can be done. Now is the time to get your act in order because mandatory reporting is coming.”

“It’s not a question of if it’s a question of when.”

A Defra spokeswoman said: “In the Resources and Waste Strategy the government committed to consult on introducing mandatory reporting for businesses.



THANK YOU!

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