

SDG TARGET 12.3 ON FOOD LOSS AND WASTE: 2025 PROGRESS REPORT

An annual update on behalf of Champions 12.3

SUMMARY

In 2015, countries from around the world adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to end poverty and hunger, protect the planet, and ensure prosperity for all populations and generations. One target within these goals is SDG 12.3, which calls for per-capita reductions of food loss and waste by 50 percent globally.

With five years remaining before 2030, the world is not on track to achieve SDG 12.3. Global progress on reducing food loss and waste has not accelerated to the point needed to achieve this ambitious target—either from companies or countries. With fewer than five years left, time is running out.

There are bright spots of action, though. Food loss and waste is rising on the political agenda, binding targets are moving closer to being enacted in many regions, and countries are increasingly addressing the issue from an entire supply chain perspective. Significantly, Japan has become the first country to cut food loss and waste in half compared to its base year and has now expanded its ambition to achieve even deeper reductions by 2030. Numerous countries and regional bodies have also adopted strategies that address the entire supply chain, showing a movement toward a more holistic approach to reducing food loss and waste.

The private sector is making more progress than national and regional governments, and initiatives and pacts focused on scaling up private sector action have made great strides. Several large companies have achieved 50 percent reductions in their food waste, showing that significant action can occur in a relatively short period of time. However, more needs to be done to bring additional companies on board.

As the world approaches 2030:

- **Countries need to commit to delivering UN Sustainable Development Goal 12.3 and include this commitment in new Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), and related strategies on food systems and resilience.** This commitment should be translated into specific, practical policy measures supported by dedicated resources and funding. Countries should begin measuring and reporting on food loss and waste and demonstrating progress through, for example, the biennial transparency reports.
- **Companies should explore opportunities for food loss and waste reduction across the entire supply chain and strengthen collaboration among businesses.** Food waste pacts and initiatives focused on action provide opportunities for sharing best practices and developing solutions that span the supply chain.

ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

SDG Target 12.3 on Food Loss and Waste: 2025 Progress Report is the 10th in an annual series of updates providing an assessment of the world's progress toward achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Target 12.3. SDG 12.3 aims to "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" (UN 2025). Prepared on behalf of Champions 12.3, this publication seeks to inform decision-makers in government, business, academia, and civil society about recent advances and what remaining steps need to be addressed if the world is to achieve the target. Previous progress reports (2016–2024) can be found at <https://www.champions123.org>. This progress report contains text from the previous editions in the series, with permission of their authors.

AUTHOR

This publication was prepared by Brian Lipinski of the World Resources Institute.

- **Finance providers and intermediaries need to increase focus on food loss and waste and seek to better understand the financial business case for action.** Companies need to increase access to finance to reduce food loss and waste in both the Global North and South, addressing region- and country-specific issues in each location. This can occur through developing tailored products, taking a whole supply chain approach, and working with intermediaries where appropriate.
- **We must change the narrative.** We need to reframe the issue of food loss and waste to appeal to what matters most to leaders: Reducing food loss and waste is not something we do for its own sake, but as a means to an end. As a global community tackling this issue, we need to do more to meet our audiences where they are and explain exactly why it should matter to them.

Preventing wasted food must be a priority until we have shifted globally to a system that values the food we produce, ensures that people are fed, and preserves the planet for generations to come. It is up to us collectively to determine when that time will be.

THE CHALLENGE

It is estimated that 40 percent of the world's food supply is lost or wasted (WWF-UK 2021). This huge level of inefficiency has significant impacts. Consider food security: Food loss is most common during either production or post-harvest handling and storage. This can affect the ability of farmers to live above the poverty line and, at times, feed their families. Food waste, which occurs near the end of the food supply chain, can affect household nutrition and food-related spending. Regardless of

where food loss and waste occur, in a world where nearly one in three people cannot afford a healthy diet, it is a travesty that 2.5 billion tons of food goes uneaten each year (FAO 2025).

In the past several years, global shocks including global conflict, newly instituted tariffs, and restrictions on exports have increased global food prices to the highest levels ever recorded (Glauber et al. 2022; Treisman 2022; Durante and Walker 2025). In the face of such shocks, reducing food loss and waste effectively means increasing the amount of food available to consumers. Recovering surplus food that would otherwise be wasted and ensuring its redistribution to people in need can also help address growing food security concerns.

Consider the economic costs. Food loss and waste results in more than \$1 trillion in economic losses globally per year (Hegnsholt et al. 2018). Investing in food loss and waste reduction efforts can therefore reap significant economic benefits.

Consider the environment. The production of food that is ultimately lost or wasted requires a land area larger than China (FAO 2013). Moreover, food loss and waste generates about 8–10 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions annually (IPCC 2019). To put this into perspective, if food loss and waste were a country, it would be the second-largest greenhouse gas emitter on the planet—surpassed only by China. When food is lost or wasted, the land, water, and fertilizer used to produce that food also go to waste.

Considering these impacts, reducing food loss and waste can generate a triple win: It can help feed more people; increase savings for farmers, businesses, and households; and reduce the food system's pressure on the environment, helping to mitigate climate change.

A HISTORIC OPPORTUNITY

In September 2015, a historic opportunity arose to elevate the issue of food loss and waste reduction on the global agenda. At the United Nations General Assembly, countries around the world formally adopted a set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)—global goals to end poverty and hunger, protect the planet, and ensure prosperity for all populations and generations—as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. SDG 12 seeks to “ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns” (UN 2025). The third target under this goal (SDG 12.3) calls for halving per-capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reducing food losses along production and supply chains, including postharvest losses, by 2030. Many countries and initiatives, including Champions 12.3, interpret this target to mean that all food loss and waste across the food supply chain should be reduced by 50 percent.

This ambitious yet achievable target has the potential to embed food loss and waste reduction firmly in public and private sector strategies around the world for the first time. Moreover, national action on this problem can help countries meet their commitments to the Paris Agreement on climate change. While this is truly a global target, every country, company, and individual has a role to play.

A ROAD MAP TO ASSESS PROGRESS

It has been 10 years since the launch of the SDGs. So how much progress has been made in relation to SDG 12.3? Is the world on track, or is the world behind? In the 2017 edition of this progress report, the authors introduced a “road map” of milestones (grouped into three-year segments) based on Champions 12.3’s “Target-Measure-Act” approach (Box 1) (Lipinski et al. 2017).

This road map is designed to track global progress by governments and businesses toward achieving SDG 12.3 and provides an assessment of where progress is sufficient or insufficient relative to the Target-Measure-Act approach. We most recently assessed these milestones in the 2022 edition of the report, in which, globally, companies were overall found to be making more progress than national governments (Lipinski 2022). Our analysis, however, found that the global rate of progress on food loss and waste reduction was insufficient to achieve SDG 12.3.

This assessment largely holds true for the most recent set of milestones, which concluded at the end of 2024. Our assessment for this period is that there is still not enough action or progress. Only a few businesses and a small number of govern-

BOX 1. Why Target-Measure-Act?

The Target-Measure-Act approach to reducing food loss and waste is based on the simple steps whereby a country or company sets a food loss and waste reduction target, measures its food loss and waste, and acts to reduce their “hot spots.”

- **Target.** Targets set ambition, and ambition motivates action. Therefore, as a first step toward reducing food loss and waste, governments and companies should set reduction targets aligned with SDG 12.3.
- **Measure.** The adage “what gets measured gets managed” holds true for this issue as well. Quantifying food loss and waste within borders, operations, or food supply chains can help decision-makers better understand how much, where, and why food is being lost or wasted. This information is the foundation for developing and prioritizing reduction strategies. Measurement is also necessary if entities are to know whether they are on track to meet SDG 12.3—they need to publicly quantify a base-year amount of food loss and waste and monitor change over time.
- **Act.** Setting targets and measuring food loss and waste are important. But what ultimately matters is action. Governments and companies therefore need to follow through on implementation. Flanagan et al. (2019) provide recommendations on several actions that actors in the food supply chain—from farmers to consumers—can take to reduce food loss and waste.

Source: Lipinski et al. 2016.

ments are doing what we all need to do. Table 1 summarizes global progress against the milestones. We use the following color-coded indicators:

Green: There is sufficient progress to suggest that the sector is on track to meet or exceed the milestone within the time period.

Yellow: There is some progress toward meeting the milestone, but it is below the pace needed to meet the milestone within the time period.

Red: There is little progress toward meeting the milestone, or previous progress is backsliding. In short, despite signs of progress, we are unlikely to achieve SDG 12.3 at current levels of action.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS AND TRENDS SINCE SEPTEMBER 2024

Governments and nongovernmental organizations

Governmental action is key to successful efforts to reduce food loss and waste. Government policies can either help or hinder food loss and waste prevention and reduction efforts. Such policies can determine whether food loss and waste reduction is a priority for government agencies, private sector actors, and households within a country or region. Most national governments are not addressing food loss and waste in a systematic way, although there are some notable exceptions. Profiled here are some examples of new and notable policy and strategy developments from national and regional governments as well as actions from nongovernmental organizations that may facilitate greater action.

TABLE 1. Global progress toward achieving SDG 12.3

	ACTOR	2024 MILESTONE	PROGRESS
TARGET	Governments	Countries with >95% of the global population have set specific food loss and waste (FLW) reduction targets aligned with Target 12.3.	Red. Countries and regional blocs representing roughly 55% of the global population had set specific targets in line with Target 12.3, although all UN Member States have collectively adopted Target 12.3.
	Companies	>95% of the world's 50 largest food companies have set specific FLW reduction targets aligned with Target 12.3. Among those setting targets, all are working with their suppliers to set their own targets.	Yellow. 80% of the world's 60 largest food companies have set specific FLW reduction targets aligned with Target 12.3, and roughly half of those companies are working with their suppliers to set targets.
MEASURE	Governments	Countries with 60% of the global population have quantified base-year FLW and have started reporting on FLW.	Red. Countries representing 12% of the global population have quantified base-year FLW and started reporting on FLW.
	Companies	60% of the world's 50 largest food companies have quantified base-year FLW and have started measuring and reporting on FLW. Among those measuring and reporting, all are working with their suppliers to reduce the latter's FLW.	Yellow. About 40% of the world's largest food companies are measuring and reporting their food loss and waste publicly, either on their own or as part of a reporting initiative. Among those measuring and reporting, half are publicly working with their suppliers to address FLW.
ACT	Governments	Countries with 60% of the global population are actively working at scale to reduce FLW. 10 countries halve their rate of FLW.	Yellow. Countries representing 52% of the global population are actively working at scale to reduce FLW. One country (Japan) has halved its rate of FLW.
	Companies	40% of the world's 50 largest food companies have active FLW reduction programs. Among those taking action, half are engaged with their suppliers to reduce the latter's FLW. The first global company halves FLW in its own operations and its supply chain.	Green. 60% of the world's 50 largest food companies have active FLW reduction programs. Among those taking action, half are publicly working with their suppliers to address FLW. Several global companies have now halved FLW within their operations.

Governments

AFRICAN UNION

In January 2025, the African Union adopted the **Kampala Declaration**, which lays out a 10-year strategy and action plan for how its 55 member states intend to enhance food security and nutrition across Africa. One target within the Kampala Declaration specifically aims to reduce post-harvest loss by 50 percent by 2035 and specifically emphasizes “the need to promote innovations in post-harvest handling, storage, and transportation to reduce food losses and improve food availability and incomes for farmers.”

Specific activities within the Kampala Declaration related to post-harvest loss reduction include:

- enhancing the integration of smallholder, women, and youth farmers into value chains to improve market access;
- removing trade barriers and improving infrastructure for efficient movement of goods; and
- investing in regional value chains and post-harvest infrastructure.

The agreement also calls for member states to incorporate the commitments within the declaration into national policies and investment plans and to ensure that effective implementation systems are in place.

CHINA

In November 2024, China released the **Action Plan on Food Conservation and Anti-Food Waste**, which takes a whole supply chain approach to food loss and waste. It calls for improved data collection as well as interventions in four major areas:

- **Grain loss reduction.** The plan issues numerous recommendations for reducing grain loss, including modernization of technology and machinery, development of standards and measurement for grain loss data collection, and improved use of byproducts to promote efficiency.
- **Raising awareness of food loss and waste reduction nationally.** The plan draws attention to household and individual waste and calls for linking food waste reduction efforts to those around healthy eating, balanced nutrition, and food portions.
- **Anti-food waste in restaurants.** Building from the “Clean Plate Campaign” launched in 2013, this area focuses on portion sizes, leftovers, and food donations.

- **Anti-food waste in cafeterias/canteens.** This section relates to cafeteria and buffet-style food service providers and is focused on preventing the over-preparation of food.

COLOMBIA

In 2024, Colombia enacted **Ley 2380 de 2024**, a law designed to promote food donation and contribute to food security as part of the country’s “Zero Hunger” objective. This law allows donors to claim a tax credit of up to 37 percent (raised from the previous 25 percent) of the value of donated food items and hygiene products. This discount can also include transportation and related costs incurred in delivering the donated items to food banks. By expanding benefits and minimizing tax barriers, Ley 2380 makes it easier for businesses to donate surplus food instead of discarding it.

EUROPEAN UNION

Furthering previous efforts around food loss and waste within the European Union, the European Council and European Parliament reached a **provisional agreement** to institute binding targets for food loss and waste reduction across European Union member states. In line with previous negotiations covered in the 2024 Progress Report, the provisional agreement introduces 10 percent reduction targets within food processing and manufacturing and 30 percent per-capita reduction targets for retail, restaurants, food service providers, and households.

The provisional agreement also tasks the European Commission with assessing loss and waste related to primary production, developing a correction factor to account for the effects of tourism on a country’s food loss and waste levels, and assessing overall achievability of targets. These matters would need to be reviewed by 2027. Member states are also separately tasked with taking targeted measures within their jurisdictions related to food donation.

JAPAN

Japan is the first country to report a more than **50 percent reduction** in national levels of food loss and waste, based on 2022 data released earlier this year. Compared to a base year of 2000, Japan has reported a 46 percent reduction in household-level food loss and waste and a 57 percent reduction in food loss and waste generated by businesses, totaling an overall 52 percent reduction. In response to this achievement, the government has strengthened its targets for 2030 to reflect a 60 percent reduction in food loss and waste generated by businesses and a 50 percent reduction within households.



These data are generated from private sector reporting, statistical surveys, and garbage composition surveys conducted by approximately 200 local governments.

Japan has achieved this reduction by tackling food loss and waste throughout the entire human food supply chain. Some of the interventions include:

- food loss and waste data reporting by companies;
- central government support for local planning relating to food loss and waste;
- the use of imperfect and previously unused agricultural products;
- the simplification and extension of date labels/expiration dates on packaging; and
- awareness-raising activities for businesses and consumers.

SINGAPORE

In late 2024, the Singapore Parliament passed a **landmark piece of legislation** to provide liability protections for food donors and intermediaries. In addition to the substantive legal protections afforded to food donors, the Bill is also the first piece of legislation focused on food donation in Singapore's history. The passage of the Bill has helped to focus public attention on food donation to reduce food waste and address food insecurity. By providing legal protection for food donors and encouraging safe donations, the Bill is poised to increase food redistribution efforts across the country.

SPAIN

Spain passed a **significant law** in 2025 addressing food loss and waste across the entire food supply chain. The law introduces standardized definitions for food loss and waste and establishes a food loss and waste hierarchy prioritizing human consumption of all food products. Additionally, the law requires all food businesses above a determined size to develop and implement a food waste prevention plan within one year of the implementation of the law.

The law also introduces financial penalties for businesses that fail to develop a prevention plan, apply the food loss and waste hierarchy, and donate unsold food. Penalties range from approximately €2,000 for minor infractions to approximately €500,000 for significant infractions. The law also lays out a series of best practices for food retailers and hospitality/food service providers and directs agencies to institute incentives for the adoption of these best practices. Finally, the law calls for the optimization of date labeling to avoid confusing or misleading labels that may lead to higher levels of consumer waste and prevent the donation of safe, nutritious food.

UNITED STATES

The most significant food loss— and waste-related action in the United States in the last year occurred at the state level. California, the most populous state in the country, **passed a law** requiring food manufacturers and producers to simplify their date labels; it was signed into law by Governor Gavin Newsom in September 2024. Specifically, food is allowed to have one date visible on the packaging—either a “best by” date for products that are not perishable but may decline in quality, or a “use by” date for perishable products that present food safety concerns. This law will come into effect in 2026.

Although this law is only directly applicable to California, it has strong potential to affect other states. Because California is a significant market for many food companies, it is likely that companies will apply the same packaging principles across the board rather than adopting one approach to date labeling within California and another elsewhere. Confusing date labels have been estimated to be responsible for up to 20 percent of consumer food waste, so the implementation of this law will provide information about how simplified and standardized date labels affect consumer food waste.

Nongovernmental organizations

THE ISO STANDARD FOR FOOD LOSS AND WASTE

In September 2025, the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) released **ISO/DIS 20001**, a draft of standardized procedures for minimizing food loss and waste across the food supply chain. These standards are meant to apply to all organizations (e.g., food producers, food processors and manufacturers, wholesalers, retailers, restaurants, and food-related charities) within the food supply chain. The draft details requirements for what is described as a “Food Loss and Waste Management System” (FLWMS). The FLWMS lays out how an organization intends to address food loss and waste within its operations.

At its most essential, ISO/DIS 20001 enables an organization “to plan, implement, operate, maintain, review, improve and update a FLWMS to minimize [food loss and waste] within its operations and/or its supply chain.” It provides guidance and requirements related to measurement, reporting, reduction activities, evaluation and assurance, and communication of food loss and waste reduction efforts. The document is open for comment until December 1, 2025, and will be revised and finalized in 2026.

THE FRAME METHODOLOGY

The **Food Recovery to Avoid Methane Emissions (FRAME) Methodology**, developed by the Global FoodBanking Network and its partners, launched in late 2024. This first-of-its-kind methodology provides guidance and tools for quantifying avoided emissions and co-benefits associated with the prevention of food loss and waste via food recovery and redistribution organizations.

The methodology was piloted by six food banks in Mexico and Ecuador and is being expanded to include eight more countries throughout 2025. It allows food recovery organizations to provide credible evidence and precise measurements of how food banks reduce methane emissions and food insecurity. Additionally, these data can provide evidence that countries and companies can achieve their climate goals while also reducing food insecurity. Finally, food banks that have been piloting FRAME are beginning to access voluntary carbon markets and other climate financing mechanisms due to the rigor of their impact data.

GLOBAL ACTION DRIVE AND NDCS

The **Global Action Drive (GAD)** brings together key NGOs to collaborate and advance global efforts to address food loss and waste. Following a detailed review, 13 priority countries and one bloc—the European Union—were identified to encourage incorporation of food loss and waste into the revised NDC 3.0. GAD members have coordinated their outreach to these countries, including through joint letters, meetings, and workshops. As countries publish their revised NDCs ahead of the de facto deadline of COP 30—November 2025—an Assessment Framework has been developed to evaluate:

- how a country has incorporated food loss and waste into their revised NDCs;
- the broader food loss and waste policy landscape and progress with implementation;
- government priorities and motivations;
- opportunities to influence other countries within the same region and beyond; and
- recommendations on next steps for GAD engagement and influencing around food loss and waste policy implementation and action.

TABLE 1. **Company-level reductions in food loss and waste exceeding 30 percent**

COMPANY	% FOOD LOSS AND WASTE REDUCTION ACHIEVED
Ingka Group (IKEA)	54
Ajinomoto	53
Carrefour	50
Kellanova	42
Fresh Del Monte	41
Google	38
Ahold Delhaize	37
Cargill	35
Pick N Pay	31

Source: Champion 12.3 analysis.

Note: This list is non-exhaustive. Percentages reflect a reduction of food loss or wasted compared to total food handled by the business.

To date, the assessment framework has been used to evaluate six countries—Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Japan, Malaysia, and the UK—providing valuable insights and clear recommendations for the next phase of engagement and lessons for other target countries.

PRIVATE SECTOR PROGRESS

As detailed in previous progress reports, the private sector as a whole is more advanced in food loss and waste reduction efforts than national governments, especially when it comes to measurement and action. Table 1 shows a sample, non-exhaustive list of companies that have publicly reported significant reductions in food loss and waste to date, compared with their base year.

PROGRESS UPDATE

Numerous food waste pacts and industry-facing initiatives devoted to action on food waste have demonstrated impressive progress over the past year:

- Companies within WRI’s **10x20x30** initiative have continued to demonstrate progress toward reducing food loss and waste. 75 percent of the 248 10x20x30 companies have set a public food loss and waste base year to measure progress against, and 56 percent have measured and publicly reported multiple years of food loss and waste data. The average reduction in food loss and waste among 10x20x30 member companies is 15.4 percent.
- The **Australian Food Waste Pact** reported a 13 percent in food waste by its 37 signatories compared to a 2022 base year, resulting in 16,000 tons of prevented waste and saving companies approximately AUD 57 million as a result. Pact members have also repurposed 982,000 tons of “food not sold,” distributing it to food donations and upcycling it into other products.
- Retailers on the West Coast of the United States, including Walmart, Kroger, Aldi, and more, have reduced unsold food rates by 30 percent since 2019—the largest reduction ever recorded. This **analysis** comes from the **Pacific Coast Food Waste Commitment**, a public-private partnership focused on reducing food waste by 50 percent by 2030 along the West Coast of the United States, and the U.S. Food Waste Pact, the national voluntary agreement for food businesses focused on reducing food waste through precompetitive collaboration and data sharing. The analysis also establishes national baselines for food waste generation at retail and corporate foodservice businesses—the first datasets of their kind—which will be used to track future progress.
- The **International Food Waste Coalition** (IFWC), a coalition of companies within Europe’s hospitality and food sector, announced that contract catering companies within the coalition had collectively reduced food loss and waste by 25 percent within their operations over the past five years. This puts IFWC members on track to achieve their collective food loss and waste reduction target by 50 percent by 2030.
- **Food Waste Free United**, a Dutch consortium of 110 stakeholders, announced a 20 percent reduction of food loss and waste across the Netherlands and a reduction of 35 percent in food waste at the retail level.

- As of 2024, over 400 businesses within the United Kingdom have committed to the [Food Waste Reduction Roadmap](#), through which companies adopt SDG 12.3 and a Target-Measure-Act approach to food waste reduction.
- The Consumer Goods Forum, The Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP), and WRI [announced](#) a joint reporting deadline for companies to share their food loss and waste data, thus simplifying the data reporting process for companies and facilitating easier sharing of food loss and waste data. This builds on The Consumer Goods Forum's 2023 release of the [first baseline assessment](#) for the 21 manufacturers and retailers within its Coalition of Action on Food Waste.

IN CLOSING

The world is not on track to achieve SDG 12.3, but there is encouraging progress that shows what is possible. More countries and companies need to radically rethink their approach to this issue, especially as the SDG target year of 2030 approaches. These recommendations elaborate on how the world can build on existing progress while still bringing in those who have yet to tackle this issue head on:

Countries need to commit to food loss and waste reduction in new Nationally Determined Contributions, National Adaptation Plans, and related strategies on food systems and resilience. This commitment should be translated into meaningful policy measures. Countries including Chile, Colombia and the UK have included FLW in their revised NDCs. Countries such as Japan and Spain have demonstrated how to incorporate food loss and waste into strategies across the supply chain, and the African Union and European Union have shown that regional bodies can motivate action among their member states. More countries and regional bodies need to follow suit and back up their commitments with dedicated resources while strengthening data gathering and sharing best practices and key findings.

Companies should explore opportunities for food loss and waste reduction across the entire supply chain and strengthen collaboration among businesses.

Reducing food waste requires coordination among stakeholders across the entire supply chain, yet many food loss and waste reduction actions focus narrowly on just one stage of the food supply chain. This approach fails to take into account the way that different stages of the supply chain interact. Food waste pacts and industry-facing initiatives focused on action provide opportunities for sharing best practices and developing

solutions that span the supply chain. Companies should adopt the Target-Measure-Act approach in their own operations while contributing to larger collaborations and scaling action.

Finance organizations need to increase focus on food loss and waste as an issue and seek to better understand the financial business case for action. Finance providers can design context-specific financial products that overcome barriers while also encouraging policy signals to scale investments. At the same time, private sector companies can leverage their farmer and intermediary networks to help aggregate smallholders into bankable groups, use long-term offtake agreements that both secure reliable supply and help farmers access credit, and finance or co-finance food loss and waste solutions that strengthen their own supply chains.

Philanthropic organizations need to invest in food loss and waste reduction programs. The [global philanthropy roadmap for food loss and waste](#) developed at COP28 identifies multiple investment-ready projects that the philanthropic community can support. With known solutions for food loss and waste reduction and growing momentum within the private and public sectors, private philanthropy can play a key role in accelerating progress.

Change the narrative. The predominant framing of food loss and waste has driven action over time, but it has not reached a broad enough audience to drive large-scale action on the issue. “Food loss and waste” can be a confusing term for many decision-makers, and focusing on waste can be generally unpleasant and negative. Economic factors tend to be the primary driver for action, and communications need to reflect this. Businesses want to maximize efficiency and thrive in the marketplace, farmers want to find buyers and sell their goods, and households want to save money as food prices continue to rise. We must reframe the issue to appeal to what matters most to leaders: Reducing food loss and waste is not something we do for its own sake, but as a means to an end. As a global community tackling this issue, we need to do more to meet our audiences where they are and explain exactly why it should matter to them.

Preventing wasted food needs to be a priority as we shift globally to a system that values the food we produce, ensures that people are fed, and preserves the planet for generations to come. Everyone has a part to play and needs to do what they can to move us in this direction—there's no more time for delay.

REFERENCES

- Durante, A. and R. Walker. 2025. "Trump Tariffs Will Raise the Cost of Food for Americans." Tax Foundation. Blog. July 28. <https://taxfoundation.org/blog/trump-tariffs-food-prices/>.
- FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations). 2025. *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2025*. Rome: FAO.
- FAO. 2013. *Food Wastage Footprint: Impacts on Natural Resources*. Rome: FAO.
- Flanagan, K., B. Lipinski, and L. Goodwin. 2019. *SDG Target 12.3 on Food Loss and Waste: 2019 Progress Report: An Annual Update on Behalf of Champions 12.3*. <https://champions123.org/sites/default/files/2020-09/champions-12-3-2019-progress-report.pdf>.
- Glauber, J., D. Laborde, and A. Mamun. 2022. "From Bad to Worse: How Russia-Ukraine War-Related Export Restrictions Exacerbate Global Food Insecurity." International Food Policy Research Institute. Blog. April 13. <https://www.ifpri.org/blog/bad-worse-how-export-restrictions-exacerbate-global-food-security/>.
- Hegnsholt, E., S. Unnikrishnan, M. Pollmann-Larsen, B. Askelsdottir, and M. Gerard. "Tackling the 1.6-Billion-Ton Food Loss and Waste Crisis." BCG. <https://www.bcg.com/publications/2018/tackling-1.6-billion-ton-food-loss-and-waste-crisis>.
- ISO (International Organization for Standardization). 2025. *ISO/DIS 20001: Food Loss and Waste Management System — Requirements for the Minimization of Food Loss and Waste Across the Food Supply Chain*. <https://www.iso.org/standard/85052.html>.
- IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change). 2019. *Climate Change and Land: An IPCC Special Report on Climate Change, Desertification, Land Degradation, Sustainable Land Management, Food Security, and Greenhouse Gas Fluxes in Terrestrial Ecosystems – Summary for Policymakers*. Edited by P.R. Shukla, J. Skea, E. Calvo Buendia, V. Masson-Delmotte, H.-O. Pörtner, D.C. Roberts, P. Zhai, et al. Geneva: IPCC. <https://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/29261>.
- Lipinski, B. 2022. *SDG Target 12.3 on Food Loss and Waste: 2022 Progress Report: 2022 Progress Report: An Annual Update on Behalf of Champions 12.3*. https://champions123.org/sites/default/files/2022-09/22_WP_SDG%20Target%2012.3_2022%20Progress%20Report_v3_0.pdf.
- Lipinski, B., A. Clowes, L. Goodwin, C. Hanson, R. Swannell, and P. Mitchell. 2017. *SDG Target 12.3 on Food Loss and Waste: 2017 Progress Report: An Annual Update on Behalf of Champions 12.3*. <https://champions123.org/sites/default/files/2020-09/champions-12-3-2017-progress-report.pdf>.
- Treisman, R. 2022. "Global Food Prices Hit Their Highest Recorded Levels Last Month, Driven Up by the War," National Public Radio, April 8. <https://www.npr.org/2022/04/08/1091705608/global-food-prices-record-high-ukraine-war>.
- UN (United Nations). 2025. "Goal 12: Ensure Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns." <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-consumption-production/>.
- WWF-UK (World Wildlife Fund-United Kingdom). 2021. *Driven to Waste: The Global Impact of Food Loss and Waste on Farms*. <https://www.worldwildlife.org/publications/driven-to-waste-the-global-impact-of-food-loss-and-waste-on-farms>.

Photo credits: p. 1, Mike Haller; p. 6, Central Texas Food Bank; p.11, Georges Lissillour.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author thanks the members of Champions 12.3 and its associates for reviewing and providing helpful input on draft versions of this publication. The author acknowledges, in particular, the following individuals for their thorough comments: Stacy Blondin (WRI), Yvette Cabrera (Natural Resources Defense Council), Liz Goodwin (WRI), Craig Hanson (WRI), Swati Hegde (WRI), Jillian Holzer (WRI), Jennifer Kelly (WRAP), Cristina Lisetchi (European Commission), Rebecca Lovelady (Danone), Tom Quested (WRAP), Richard Swannell (WRAP), James Wangu (WRI), and Bartosz Zambrzycki (European Commission).

The author thanks Davi Sherman for copyediting and Romain Warnault for publication layout and design.

This publication represents the views of the author alone.

ABOUT CHAMPIONS 12.3

Champions 12.3 is a unique coalition of public and private sector leaders from around the world dedicated to inspiring ambition, mobilizing action, and accelerating progress toward achieving SDG 12.3.

Visit www.champions123.org for more information.

CHAMPIONS 12.3

