

FOOD WASTE CITIES TO THE RESCUE!



FOODWIN

CITIES TO THE RESCUE:

A FRAMEWORK OF ACTION ON FOOD WASTE

Cities can act as catalysts to reduce food waste! But... Where to start? **FoodWIN** designed this manual to guide cities to a comprehensive food waste strategy. With guidelines for action and illustrative examples from FoodWIN and other organisations, **we hope to inspire your city to take on the food waste challenge!**

WHY CITIES?

As **FoodWIN**, we believe that cities can become catalysts in reducing urban food waste.

As the main responsible for waste management and the closest authority to businesses, consumers and civil society, they have a great opportunity to stimulate innovation and entrepreneurship around food waste. City governments can bring the relevant actors together and **create a thriving ecosystem, where changemakers and the city join forces to tackle food waste.**

WHY FOOD WASTE?

One third of all food doesn't make it from the farm to our stomach. This equals **173 kg of food per EU citizen annually**, or 88 million tons in total.

Throughout the production of this food, a host of resources is wasted (seeds, water, energy, fertilizer, labor, land, financial capital) and greenhouse gases are emitted. Therefore, tackling food waste has many beneficial impacts: we help achieving **the Sustainable Development Goals concerning climate change, jobs and zero hunger**, as well as the EU's climate targets.



Reducing food waste cuts costs for everyone. London spectacularly reduced its food waste by 15% in 6 months at the household level in 2012. For every £1 the local government invested in the project, waste management services saved £8 and households saved £84!



Reducing food waste is key to making your city carbon neutral. Cutting out all avoidable food waste would reduce greenhouse gases by an estimated 12% across Europe! [Recent research](#) shows that reducing food waste is the 3rd most impactful solution to climate change.



Food surplus is one of the most cost-effective ways to feed people in need when it's recovered and redistributed. It decreases costs for social organisations and helps to combat food poverty and food inequality.

WHO IS FOODWIN?

We are a team of **food waste experts**, leading a **network of food waste changemakers** such as entrepreneurs, social innovators and grassroots organisations. The network comprises around 150 food waste changemakers from across Europe who we support with **learning activities, opportunities for collaboration and societal visibility**.

By collaborating with the changemakers from our network, we offer **support and innovative solutions to local governments to reduce food waste**. We have successfully implemented actions in the cities of Bruges, Ghent, Amsterdam, and within the regions of Limburg (NL), Brussels, Vlaams-Brabant and the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.

We have extensive knowledge on best practices used in other cities and methods developed by the actors within our network. With this practical experience, we created a framework that offers tools to help cities reduce food waste. This manual gives you an outline of that framework, as a first taste of what your city can do!



WHAT CAN YOUR CITY DO TO REDUCE FOOD WASTE?



DIAGNOSIS

We have learned that once cities know how much food waste occurs on their territories (see 1. “Food Waste Diagnosis”), they cannot but take action.



STRATEGY

With a concrete view of the situation, cities are in an ideal position to co-create a strategy (see 2. “Strategy”) alongside local stakeholders of the food chain, companies and civil society, and thus develop an increasingly powerful dynamic of collaboration and action between these actors.



ACTION

Together, this coalition of actors can define what actions (see 3. “Actions”) can yield the most impactful results and who is best placed to implement them. Cities & stakeholders can therefore choose to (1) raise awareness, (2) prevent food waste, (3) redistribute and reuse food surplus and (4) stimulate entrepreneurship and innovation.



STEP 1: A FOOD WASTE DIAGNOSIS

Through an **in-depth analysis** of the situation within its territory, cities can get a clear idea of how big the problem of food waste is and what actions earn priority. At the same time, we get a first impression of the most promising opportunities the fight against food waste offers. Many questions arise: “Where is food wasted? By whom? How much

goes to waste? How much money could be saved? Who is already working on food waste reduction? What are the “quick-win-actions” to reduce food waste fast, save costs and reduce greenhouse gas emissions?” As numbers tend to be much higher than expected, the answers give an overview that automatically urges action.

Example - Read the story of **Loulé and São**, two Portuguese towns that conducted such a diagnosis of where and how much food goes to waste in their territory on page 8.





STEP 2:

BUILD A STRATEGY WITH STAKEHOLDERS

HOP 1: BUILD A COALITION

Food waste is a problem and an opportunity that involves not only city governments, but also stakeholders across the whole supply chain. Therefore, building a coalition with these actors is a key step. The size of the platform can vary between 10-50 participants depending on the region and whether you want to

involve the most ambitious frontrunners or reach a wider group. The coalition should include at least: businesses, farmers, NGOs/non-profits, startups and representatives from the city administration itself (both from the economy/welfare and the environment/waste management departments).

HOP 2: CO-CREATE A STRATEGY

This coalition co-creates a strategy based on the food waste diagnosis. The participatory nature of this process is important to ensure the collaboration of the various actors in implementing the actions that come out of the strategy. Such a strategy includes:

(1) a concrete target to reduce food waste over 1 year, 5 years and 10 years, (2) the focus areas or sectors where the coalition wants to reduce food waste and (3) concrete actions for the following 1-3 years, that can be categorised in 4 types (cf. infra).

Once the strategy is established, it's useful to have quarterly meetings between the members of the coalition to share updates, stimulate collaboration, solve challenges and create new solutions.

Example - Read how the **city of Bruges** established its Food Lab and co-created solutions with its local stakeholders on page 8.



Participants of the Food Waste Challenge in Amsterdam

STEP 3: TAKE ACTION

RAISE AWARENESS

Raising awareness among citizens is crucial because 42% of food waste in Europe comes from households. It is vital to ensure everyone is informed and aware of the many potential solutions. Workshops, competitions, festivals, advertising campaigns... are all possible attention grabbers. The awareness we want to stick in people minds involves the scale and impact of food waste in the living area at stake, the most important reasons for household food waste and practical tips to avoid it.

“**Feeding the 5000**” is such a community awareness raising event, where 5000 meals are served made up entirely of food surplus. Paris, Athens, Milan and Brighton are some of the cities that have already succeeded in this, feasting upon this food that would otherwise be wasted. FoodWIN’s [Food Waste Awards](#) puts solutions to food waste in the spotlight, while creating a professional community around the issue of food waste and drawing media attention and public awareness.

Example - London took a more rhythmic approach, read more about their swinging Disco Soup to raise awareness about food waste on page 9.

PREVENT FOOD WASTE

Avoiding food waste should always be the primary strategy. A food waste diagnosis is crucial to reveal where and why food waste occurs. On the basis of this, appropriate measures can be taken, such as better planning to avoid over-production and better storage to make food last longer in school canteens, hospitals and healthcare institutions, or company canteens. The return on these investment are impressive. According to a [recent study](#), every €1 invested in actions to reduce food waste yields €8 return for cities, €92 for households

and €14 for companies. [Rest-O-Pack Brussels](#) (Belgium) is such a measure: the local authorities developed a new brand for doggy bags to raise awareness about food waste in restaurants, and change consumption habits by encouraging people to take their leftovers home. **Roubaix** school canteens (France) put many actions in place to manage their food catering more efficiently and prevent food waste from occurring in their kitchens. This resulted in major cost savings.

Example - Hospital and health care heroes reported in the Belgian **city of Bruges!** Read more about how they decrease their food waste on page 9.



RECOVER AND REDISTRIBUTE FOOD SURPLUS!

First, we connect potential donors of food surplus with their potential recipient organisations. For example, by organising a round table event and providing a communication platform for automatic matchmaking. Or by finding logistical solutions to deliver food surplus charities and ultimately, to people with less access to food. With a working logistical system, it is possible to collect from several donors while respecting the cold chain to store the food and to deliver the required quantities to the recipient organisations.

[Bourse Aux Dons / Schenkingsbeurs](#) for example, is a national Belgian platform designed to facilitate food donations between professional actors of the food

sector and recipients like social organisations or food waste changemakers that process food surplus.

Another platform is [SavingFood](#), an online network community of various stakeholders. In Belgium, the Saving Food app will be used for the gleaning network (an organisation saving food surplus at farm level), coordinating volunteers, farmers and food redistribution charities to salvage the tonnes of fruit and vegetables that go to waste on farms. Throughout Europe there are plenty of social businesses that make new products out of surplus. This model creates jobs and added value from products that would otherwise be wasted.

Example - Read how **Extraordinary Almere** provides logistical solutions to food surplus and supports people in need on page 11.

STIMULATE SOCIAL INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP!

Local governments can also play a role by giving support to entrepreneurs and start-ups that prevent food waste or use food surplus. A dynamic group of food waste changemakers creates positive change, helps to raise awareness among citizens and challenges social norms around food waste. Cities can organise competitions for business ideas to reduce food waste,

or coaching workshops for food waste changemakers and startups. Providing long-term support and/or funding to follow-up these social innovation projects can then create a lasting impact. After all, a hotbed of sustainable and progressive innovation can only improve a city's reputation!

Example - Discover how the **Province of Vlaams-Brabant** supported social entrepreneurship around food waste on page 11.

SOME FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Real world examples from local governments that took on the challenge of tackling food waste strategically.



FOOD WASTE DIAGNOSIS

LOULÉ AND SÃO BRÁS DE ALPORTEL

What happened?

A diagnosis of the current food waste situation was conducted in two towns in the south of Portugal: Loulé and São Brás de Alportel. This was an EU project in which a local consultant, Foodways Consulting, was contracted to do the diagnosis.

What were the results?

The Food Waste Diagnosis gave insights into the specific food waste situation of these two towns in order to assess how best to combat it at the local level. Foodways Consulting found that 2.06 kilograms of food is produced per

inhabitant per day, while only 1.02 kilograms of this is consumed per day. **This results in a food waste rate of 50.4%, the equivalent of 379.6 kilograms of food waste per inhabitant, per year!**

Now what?

The report offered a diagnosis of the main reasons for food losses and food waste in the municipalities, as well as a quantification of the waste volume. Furthermore, the report offered preliminary advice on how to proceed after the diagnosis, identifying and recommending actions to reduce food waste.



FOOD WASTE STRATEGY

FOOD LAB BRUGES

What is the strategy?

In 2015, the City of Bruges and Food-WIN set up a steering group “Food Lab Bruges” with local stakeholders. This platform is based around sustainable food (focusing on food waste, as well as urban agriculture and farm to fork food). On the basis of a situational analysis, the Food Lab devised a long term strategy with local actors to reduce food waste. The Food Lab meets quarterly and is the one-stop-shop in Bruges for food waste and sustainable food.

What does the Food Lab do?

Since 2015 the Food Lab has co-organised several actions to deliver this strategy and reduce food waste: a Feeding the 5000 “(H)eerlijk Brugge”, creating a sustainable food manual which Bruges uses for catering at all of its events, a project to reduce fish waste in the harbour and a co-creation process to reduce food waste in hospitals.



RAISING AWARENESS: DISCO SOUP LONDON

What happened?

London, April 29 2017 - Londoners gathered to chop vegetables and bop to the beat of live music at a food waste feast. It was a day full to the brim with activities, workshops, talks, eating and drinking, celebrating the delicious solutions to food waste and raising awareness on other climate change issues.

Participants ate a free meal, all from food that would have otherwise been wasted, danced, drank Toast Ale (beer made from surplus bread) and other food waste inspired cocktails, all while boogying the night away.

Disco + Soup = ?

A Disco Soup is an event where participants cook and eat a meal together made out of food that would have otherwise gone to waste, with music and a dynamic, fun atmosphere. Feed-back organised this event and together with many entrepreneurs that added various events to the day. This involved workshops and talks from various social enterprises and from some of the most exciting pioneers in food, technology, activism and sustainability.

It is a tried and tested method of raising awareness and is very effective in bringing together local actors and engaging the public in a fun and dynamic way. This event raised public awareness and education, as well as media attention around the issue of food waste.

PREVENT FOOD WASTE: REDUCING FOOD WASTE AT HEALTHCARE INSTITUTIONS IN BRUGES

The City of Bruges is supporting 4 healthcare institutions (2 hospitals, a retirement home and a public caterer delivering to healthcare organisations) over one year to reduce food waste and cut costs. The process supports these institutions to measure food waste, learn about best practice, develop their own set of measures to reduce food waste, test those measures on a small scale and upscale them within their entire organisation.

Why?

According to Wageningen University, hospitals in the Netherlands waste on average 40% of their food.

Reducing food waste can save between 50,000 - 150,000€ per year per hospital.

Who is involved?

Employees of the hospitals, catering or facility services, nurses, experts from across Europe.

What are the goals?

The goal of the project is to reduce food waste and costs by 20% in one year in these organisations. Results are expected in June 2018.



Hospital in Bruges - measuring food waste



Hospital in Bruges - measuring food waste

RECOVER AND REDISTRIBUTE FOOD: EXTRAORDINARY ALMERE

What is it?

The Dutch community of Almere set up a partnership of profit and non-profit organisations that work to reduce food waste and use food surplus. They offer healthy food to people on a low-income. They distribute food surplus through distribution points to deliver them to those in need.

Why?

The aim is to link two policy priorities: sustainability within the city and reducing poverty. By connecting food surplus to those in need, food poverty is addressed in a sustainable way, simultaneously reducing their climate impact.

Who is involved?

Extraordinary Almere works with neighborhood teams, hospitals, Rabobank (funding), Floriade 2022, welfare organizations, supermarkets, hospitality, farmers, police, media and press, politicians etc.

What are the outcomes?

Food surplus is recovered from 3-4 supermarkets twice a week. In 2018, the project launches a monthly cooking class using surplus food in all distribution points. These classes will use professional kitchens and refrigeration equipment. The aim is to educate not only about food surplus, but also about healthy eating on a budget.

STIMULATE SOCIAL INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP: FOOD WASTE CHALLENGE LEUVEN

FoodWIN hosted a startup process over several months to encourage entrepreneurship where students and young professionals were challenged to build their own social enterprise to reduce food waste. The event involved innovation and coaching processes to support the entrepreneurs. Participants visited places where food waste occurs: a farm, a bakery, people's homes. They did gleaning, a bread recovery, a cooking workshop and organised a Disco Soupe. Afterwards, successful entrepreneurs inspired shared their experiences to inspire the participants to develop and implement their own idea.

Why a food waste challenge?

This innovation process creates sustainable and self-sufficient means of tackling food waste. We supported people to set up businesses that use food surplus or helping existing food businesses use food surplus.

Two new businesses were launched from the initiative, creating jobs and systematically reducing food waste: [Shak'Eat](#) and [WOW Food](#). It also created PR for the city and for the entrepreneurs, who increased their visibility and their professional network, meeting potential partners/donors. Moreover, the project stimulated innovation, entrepreneurship and a creative dynamic in the province of Vlaams-Brabant.

Who was involved?

FoodWIN provided the participants with expertise on food waste and social entrepreneurship. The coaching and masterclass processes brought together innovative coaches, current entrepreneurs, panel speakers and expert jury members; combining various expertise and experience in working with food waste.



Food Waste Challenge in Leuven

WE NEED YOU!

TAKE ON THE FOOD WASTE CHALLENGE!

Are you convinced that food waste is a vitally important, cross-cutting issue that impacts our economy, society and our environment? Do you believe that reducing food waste can create jobs, carbon emissions, hunger, that it can stimulate the local economy and the positive public image of your city?

Then take on the food waste challenge! FoodWIN will be very happy to chat with you over some coffee (or surplus juice) to see how we can be of value in your area. Ring our bell, pick up the phone... We are open to collaborations with any motivated actor that wants to reduce food waste.

For requests or more information on collaborating
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WASTING FOOD IS A
SERIOUS PROBLEM.
→THE SOLUTIONS←
HOWEVER, ARE AN
≧ **OPPORTUNITY** ≦
TO DEVELOP YOUR CITY.

