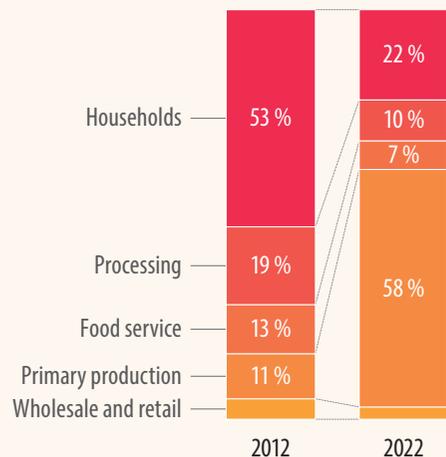


The **United Nations** General Assembly designated 29 September as the International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste in order to promote global efforts towards meeting the UN sustainable development goals' target 12.3, where the aim is to halve per capita food waste at the retail and consumer level by 2030, and reduce food loss along the food production and supply chains.

According to the two available estimates (from **2012** and **2022**), each of which uses a different methodology, food waste in the EU amounts to between 88 million and 153.5 million tonnes annually; the associated costs stand

Breakdown of food waste by sector in the EU, 2012, 2022



EU to introduce binding targets to cut food waste by 50 % by 2023

at €143 billion a year. This amount of food waste is the equivalent of around 227 million tonnes of CO₂, or about 6 % of total EU emissions. Primary production, households and the processing sector are the biggest source of food waste in the EU. While nearly 39 million people in the EU cannot afford a quality meal every second day, each person wastes on average between 173 kg and 343 kg of food a year.

Reducing food loss and waste is an integral part of the EU's 2020 **Farm to Fork strategy** for a fair, healthy and environmentally friendly food system. The strategy proposes

Total food waste in the EU, 2012, 2022



Food waste per person in the EU, 2012, 2022



Food poverty in the EU, 2020

39 million people cannot afford a quality meal every second day



setting legally binding targets to cut food waste by 50 % across the EU by 2023, and revising EU rules on date marking to avoid unnecessary discarding of food due to people's wrong perception of the **'use by'** and **'best before'** dates.

EU countries are expected to have started collecting data on food waste in 2020, using a new **harmonised methodology** introduced in 2019, and to have reported on national food waste levels by mid-2022. In 2017, the European Commission issued **guidelines on food donation** to facilitate the recovery and redistribution of safe and edible food to those in need.

How to reduce food waste at home

-  Plan your meals
-  Use leftovers
-  Know your dates: 'use by' is about food safety and 'best before' is about food quality
-  Use a smaller plate and refill as needed
-  Freeze (ready-made portions)
-  Store food properly
-  Know what is in your pantry and fridge

How to reduce food waste at the supermarket

-  Write a shopping list
-  Do not shop when hungry
-  Buy only the quantity you need
-  Choose 'imperfect' fruit and vegetables (often on discount)

Source: **FUSION**, 2016 and **FeedbackEU**, 2022, **Eurostat**, 2020