

INTRODUCTION

The GO SAVEFOOD Operational Group is a project aimed at analyzing the current situation of the so-called "Food Waste" in the Food Industry sector (hereinafter FI) to try to establish action and collaboration measures that result in its minimization through an innovative strategy.

GO SAVEFOOD frames its activity within the call for the creation of supra-autonomous operational groups within the framework of the National Rural Development Programme 2014-2020, financed by the Spanish National Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and the European Agricultural Fund of Rural Development (EAFRD).

Firstly, the FAO was who warned about what was happening: one third of the food that is produced worldwide for human consumption is lost or wasted for different reasons. It has been precisely the UN, through FAO, one of the most active institutions with initiatives such as the SAVE FOOD Network and its goal of halving the waste of food in the world by 2030.

Other initiatives worth highlighting are the "EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste" and at the national level the MAPAMA strategy "More Food, Less Waste".

Food waste represents economic losses for the operators of the food chain, but it has many more connotations such as environmental, social, supply to the world population, etc; therefore the agri-food sector should consider this as an opportunity to contribute to the generation of Social Welfare.

Operational Group for the development of an innovative strategy for reducing food losses:

Boosting the development of Bioeconomy

(GO SAVEFOOD)



OPERATIONAL GROUP GO SAVEFOOD

Operational Group for the development of an innovative strategy for reducing food losses:

Boosting the development of Bioeconomy

(GO SAVEFOOD)

STUDY STAGES

1. Protocol of information withdrawal

Creation of a survey addressed to agri-food companies with the aim of knowing what kind of losses were produced in their processes of raw material transformation.

2. Analysis of the results of the survey

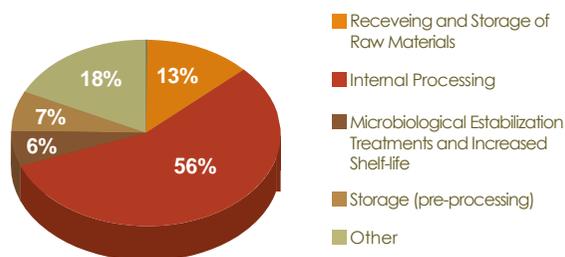
More than 100 companies from 8 Spanish regions participated (Castilla y León, Galicia, Aragón, Andalucía, Madrid, Navarra, Euskadi and Comunidad Valenciana). The main conclusions were:

• Raw material collection phase

The main causes of rejection in this phase are the non-compliance with the organoleptic parameters by quality criteria (75%) and the presence of foreign materials in 81% for what concerns food safety criteria.

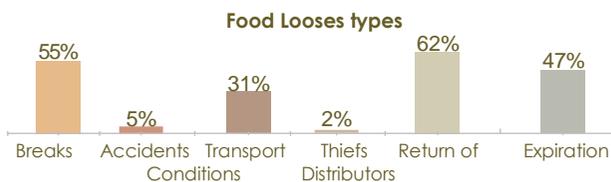
• Transformation phase

56% of the waste is produced during the processes of internal manipulation and processing (mechanical, thermal, biological processes, etc.).



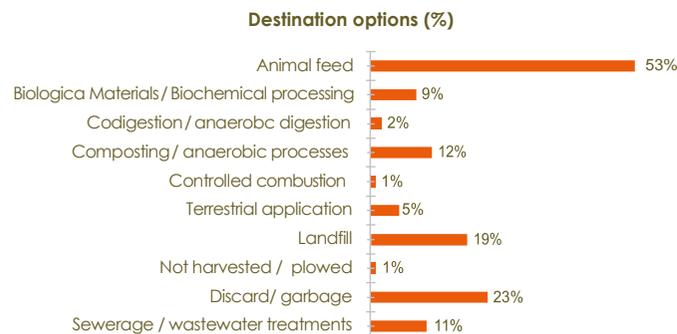
• Finished Product and Distribution Phase

The main losses are due to the returns by distributors (62%), breaks (55%) and product lapses (47%), mainly in the storage and logistics phases.



• Destination of food losses

The vast majority of wastes and food losses generated in the different phases are destined to animal feed (between 50-60%) and if this option is not eligible, to waste and discards



3. Selection of good business practices, institutions, identification of certifications and contact with other Operational Groups

Examples of good practices, various certifications and business and institutional initiatives that work in this field have been identified. In addition, other Operational Groups that have started to work specific subsectors for waste reduction have been contacted.



The partners of the project have worked in parallel in the dissemination of the main results of GO SAFEFOOD in their respective regions to raise awareness of the companies of the sector as well as raising awareness about the good practices that the F.I. are carrying out.



CONCLUSIONS

The Spanish F.I. is currently characterized by its high technological capacity in addition to being able of guaranteeing high standards of food security. While this sector has to still improve considerably, its waste management policies, wiliness and openness for innovation can set up an optimal scenario to implement new policies and obtain results in a considerable short time period, needing for that a close collaboration between different stakeholders and sectors from the F.I.

The main sources of food waste are the no comply with quality and food security standards. Assessment of raw material conditions during reception, transformation processes and further post-processed are the crucial steps to be further improved. Furthermore, package alterations, expiration dates and returned products to wholesalers are also the main cause during distribution and logistics.

The survey carried on during the implementation of this task force highlighted the animal feed as the main destination for food waste followed by dumping sites, thus the importance of value and economic loss on the current situation, creating consequently a demand for R&D to find other ways to revalorize food waste and reduce food losses.

After a preliminary assessment of the origin and destination of food waste, it is crucial to continue working on optimizing the food value chain and sustainability policies to accomplish the objectives established by the EC expected in 2030. For that it becomes essential a close collaboration between different stakeholders of the F.I. as well as considerable investment into awareness campaigns and innovation.