



Food Waste Innovation Incubator Day

19 May 2017, BMEL, Berlin
Workshop Minutes



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1 Executive Summary

This document contains the minutes of the Food Waste Innovation Incubator Day on 19. May 2017 at the [German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture](#) (BMEL). The Incubator Day was co-hosted with the BMEL and their initiative "[Too good for the bin!](#)" and carried out in collaboration with the [Food Waste Innovation Network](#). The aim of this workshop was to bring food waste innovators and experts together to learn from each other, develop solutions to food waste issues in the food chain, and improve cooperation.

The main target groups were entrepreneurs, companies in the food industry, and policy makers.

2 Introduction

2.1 Keynote– Dr. Maria Flachsbarth, BMEL

Welcomes group, states that it is encouraging to see many initiatives working on food waste and organisations from across the supply chain, policy and research represented at the event. Emphasizes that there is a lot to learn from collaboration, and also from failures. Introduces 'Too good for the bin' campaign launched 2012, now working on a strategy around food waste in dialogue with stakeholders.

2.2 Introduction to REFRESH project – Stephanie Wunder, Ecologic Institute

- REFRESH: EU research project with goal to contribute towards Sustainable Development Goal 12.3 of halving per capita food waste at the retail and consumer level and reducing food losses along production and supply chains, reducing waste management costs, and maximizing the value from un-avoidable food waste and packaging materials.
- Important to highlight good practices, exchange experience, learn from success and failure
- Incubator Day building on REFRESH Conference on 18.05.

2.2.1 Introduction to FoodWIN – Alice Codsi, FoodWIN

- Food Waste Innovation Network: network of innovators working on food waste - e.g.
 - Transformation of food surplus in product (ex. Les ReTroques)
 - Distribution of food surplus (Schenkingsbeurs)
 - Catering and restaurants with Food surplus (e.g. Transition surplus Food Café)
- Catalysing change: Supports cities with implementing reductions of food waste with food strategies (prevent, use food surplus, social innovation)
- Impactful projects: Food Waste Awards, Juice For Change, Zero Food Waste Flanders

3 Speed Dating networking session

Coffee break

4 Inspiration – Best Practice Presentations

4.1 Corinne Castle – Transition Café & Surplus Food Project

Presentation

- The Café is part of the transition town and in the transition movement
- More than just Food Waste:
 - Wind turbine project – Financial independence
 - Bringing community together
 - Working with refugees
- Steps in Café project
 - Survey – what do people want?
 - People wanted community hub -> chose to create a café to come together
 - At first some residents in the town were sceptical, but volunteers took initiative into their own hands, and just started to renovate the building. More and more people got involved
 - Chefs are often house-cooking chefs who can react/improvise better to unpredictable supply of ingredients, but supported by some professional chefs
 - Essential for success:
 - Connection with other groups
 - At start only some residents came, because many thought it was a soup kitchen. The redecoration of the room made it more attractive to a wider variety of people.
 - Different with real junk food project -> they charge for meals, because community said they were more comfortable with this approach
 - Several projects / activities within scope of a café, part of role as community hub
 - E.g. Make a Meal of It -> cooking workshop to learn reduce food waste and how to use surplus
 - At first some shops didn't want to say food was coming from them -> This attitude changed, now shops want to give it

- Shops are pressured by public, public by policies
- Often the message is food waste is for poor people -> but message of the transition cafe is different -> they want to tackle it as an environmental issue
- Outlook: Café will close end of 2017
 - Will continue evolving, also have many other projects
 - Now have a project to support growth of other food waste projects in the region
 - Future of transition? -> website where you can find all information about all other projects they do / have experience

Questions for and from the audience

Question from Corinne to the audience: how can we show change/impact?

- Sophia Bensch: conducted a small survey -> result that people who changed most are already within the community -> we invite people to help even only for one day / during dinners, to make them feel part of it, to show them how it works

Question public: Will not look for other place for café? Why not continue the café idea?

- Corinne Castle: Was offered another place -> But now have the feeling that everybody is reached/impact is already maximized. If the goal is to raise awareness around food waste, the Café is not best practice anymore to reach this target, as it is well-reached and now need other approaches
- Maybe next step: Incubator with young entrepreneurs -> Project to let young people stay in region. Also open to support others in opening up café e.g. with skype

Audience: How do you do capacity building, how important is meeting space?

- Corinne Castle: In start we needed to explain that we work with food waste, so the café was good to talk about that, but now we've reached everybody. We have around 30 volunteers per week, 50 volunteers in month

Question public: Do the shops reduce their food waste or they just give it all to you?

- Corinne Castle : No, shops do not change their business model. We make them more aware of it, but quality of food depends on the personal contact with the person working in the shop at that moment. So we need to go regularly to maintain personal contacts with the givers.

Question public: Would you advise to others to start a café in a small community?

- Corinne Castle: Step one: Motivation, for café you need community, not just one person. To have impact maybe other means are better, for example one day a week big action, pop-up
- Tristram Stuart: Cafes are really a lot of work and have a high burnout factor, very resource intensive, often don't generate enough income to pay people to work ... It is beautiful project, but on long term not often sustainable in many cases where the model is copied
- Corinne Castle: A café is useful if the group has the right goals and capacity – creating a community space and fighting/raising awareness about food waste. Not all groups have these goals/the right capacity, in which case a café is not the best option. That's why it's good that it stops now, want to use experience to help others, support also policy makers.

4.2 LWL-Clinic Münster – Thomas Voß

Presentation

LWL-Clinic Münster comprises two clinics where food waste reduction projects were conducted

- Clinic 1: every day 900 meals
- Clinic 2: every day 850 meals

Organic meals since 2005, now 20% from regional and seasonal food -> *reducing food waste is economical compensation to make room for this extra cost*

Success factors:

- Team work: involving chefs, cooks, nurses, etc.
 - E.g. with Internal contest between different hospitals -> prize for who reduced the most
- Excite your team and it will be successful -> every person can help in the reduction, involve employees in project
- Have every day 20/30 feedback papers from patients about kitchen -> To improve quality continuously
- Start with measurement: Measurement was 2 times 5 days in row, for lunch time. In other hospitals of the iSuN study they also measured morning and evening
- Started project in 2014. In 2017 there is 12000 kg of waste less than 2014
- Introduction of a general small portion -> people were asked to ask for less if they had too much. Could ask for more if they are hungry
- Communication to patients: explaining why we give smaller meals, ask to help us reduce

- Making use of leftovers from buffets at events -> message to guests, take leftovers home
- Introduction of feedback system. Spoiling area -> production

Presentation part 2: Christine Göbel -> scientific point of view, iSuN at University of Applied Sciences Münster

- Introduced research design (see slides for overview)
- Food Waste Measurement -> input-output-analyses -> important not only to look at waste, but also at what you produce
- One important measure is communication – between different parts of hospital, but also to guests
- www.lebensmittel-abfall-vermeiden.de -> all information around this topic in German
- Also used tools from WRAP and translated them/adapted to German context

Questions Audience

Tristram Stuart: At a hospital in Holland they were able to reduce waste by 40%. Make to order was one of the solutions. Biggest impact came from making better food, quality food that people actually want to eat it is essential. Training chefs to make good quality delicious food is single most important thing to reduce food waste in public catering as hospitals

Audience: Numbers on differences between departments?

- Tried to measure but without success so far

Joost Snels: in Dutch hospitals there is a lot of data already. Did not find much data in Germany. What did you do with money that you saved?

- Reinvest money to spend for good quality food

Audience: is food waste an issue in German hospitals generally, do they have the issue on their radar?

- About 2000 hospitals in Germany, hope to be example, but still much work to do. There are some hospitals doing something about it, but not making info/actions public.

Audience: Important to collect food waste in one place, so you can visualise it

Audience: Who was the leading person, inspiration as team?

- Hospital wanted to offer good food, and organic food. iSuN wanted to work on food waste -> synergy to make good project

Audience: how can this example spread?

- We talk a lot with other hospitals, and told them about it. Telling them that they burn money in the kitchen -> this is the only way to get their attention.

Audience: If you focus on quality of food, do you feel pressure from budget perspective?

Catering is only 2 percent of hospital budget, so not the most important issue from a budget perspective. However it is huge for patient satisfaction.

Audience: Good food is important for recovery

Audience: Presently you have many tools to measure, equipment to measure and apps. Ex. Winnow tool. Helps to also detect at what food is the biggest problem, where you have to reduce. Could introduce the use of such a tool to help continue improving.

4.3 Food Fair Platform / Schenkingsbeurs / Bourse aux Dons- Marion Cocina – level IT

Presentation

- Level IT -> SME in Liege – working on IT platforms in various sectors
- Food Fair Platform is project from FdSS, Level IT and Komosie
- Food Fair platform has 3 tools:
 1. Geographical map with all donors and organizations who can receive
 2. Occasional donations
 3. Systematic donations -> tracks what has been given in what quantity
- Goals
 - For moment focused on retail
 - In future want to include other sectors

Key Figures by May 2017 – 600 tons transited, more than 300 food aid organizations have already been registered

Questions Audience

Question: Do you check the charities, and how?

- Need to be registered charity, they are checked at start by the different partners Komosie and FdSS.

Audience: Here you charge very cheap for supermarkets. In Ireland and UK retail invested big money in the equivalent platform. So retail should pay more than just the economical win they get from saving on waste taxes. Companies that waste food should get brand damage to force them to reduce waste, so they will pay more to you.

Audience: There is a difference between different countries. In Belgium and France social organizations working on food waste are supported by government, in UK not. Money that retail is saving on food should go to social aid organizations

Audience: Constant supply versus capacity demand

- Supply retail: Survey -> donators will give if they have certainty that it will be taken.
 - Hungary: focus on giving as much as possible, quality depends on individual in supermarket
 - France: Tax break for donations -> pushes supermarkets to donate max possible
- Demand among charities: Obligation to take all creates new stream of waste -> dangerous
- Solution Food Fair platform: Systemic donations – planning with every day a different social charity who takes
 - Create personal contact with all actors to create alternatives for max coordination supply / demand. Working on E-logistic system to use free capacity of local logistics resources as from private logistics companies for transport donations
- Solution from UK, Tesco: Ratings not on quantity of food donated but how well served the charities were

Audience: Useful to look at the warehouses, not only retail

- UK: done already
- Belgium: starting, is next step. Retail easiest to register due to barcode. Later hospitals ...
- Hungary: Study Tesco, warehouses have no waste, push the waste to the retail level

Lunch

5 Challenge Presentations

5.1 PENNY

Presentation

From a strategic point of view, "Food Waste at PENNY" includes a customer-oriented part (communication measures aimed at education), internal part (improving internal processes and employee awareness), and new product lines

Consumer education:

- Message: Save money by running a household in a smart way
- Penny gives advice about planning, correct storage of products, creative use of leftovers

- Requirements in communication:
 - No moral finger
 - Positive statements
 - Show personal benefits to consumers

Internal processes and awareness

- Aim: Improve the transparency/ data quality about incurring food waste in stores/ware-houses
- Activities:
 - Talk internally about existing activities (e.g. cooperation with food bank)
 - Improve existing internal processes
 - Improve awareness of employees in stores/ warehouses

Food waste reducing product line: Naturgut „Organic Heroes“

- Organic fruits and vegetables of the brand PENNY Naturgut that are not always perfect
- Sales raise of 7,5%, sales heroes such as cucumbers or peppers raised up to 50%
- Advantages:
 - Less effort in separating the fruits and vegetables for the farmers
 - Organic farming brings more profit
 - Avoidance of food waste
 - Strengthen customer appreciation for production of fruits/ veg

Other current food waste activities include:

- Online food waste challenge with celebrity chef and bloggers
- Facebook posts with leftover recipes
- Advice about correct food storage on PENNY packaging (bread and produce)
- Related content in weekly flyers

Challenge question: How can we build on our successful existing food waste reduction efforts

to...

- educate consumers: increase their appreciation for food
- further improve internal retail processes: increase commitment of staff, need match with customer demands

... and make a direct impact on food waste?

Feedback session

- Tristram Stuart: Good to hear that the value of food products is the same whether or not they are mis-shapen in organic line. This will help consumers see that the value of a food product is not lower based on its appearance, as its nutritional value remains intact.
- Tristram Stuart: You are currently rating success on increase of sales. Maybe it would be valuable to reconsider this tracking indicator and instead track food waste reduction quantities, as it is your objective.
- Mirka Stark: Agree with this idea, it could be a possibility to ask our clients for food waste reduction levels so that we can centralize it in our system.
- Tristram Stuart: How do you take crop forecasting into consideration (in terms of who owns the food product at each given stage of the value chain)?
- Mirka Stark: Forecasting needs to be looked at in better detail, we will take this into consideration.
- Audience: How can PENNY form arguments in order to internally communicate on and convince its hierarchy that food waste reduction initiatives need to be prioritised?
- Tristram Stuart: The arguments should touch on how the company will gain competitive edge that they would be able to communicate on if implemented these initiatives, as well as a common goal for its employees to work towards. It has been seen with Tesco, who committed to donating 100% surplus food in stores which are deemed fit for donation, by the end of 2017. This goal has united Tesco's staff and has boosted morale. This best practice can be applied to PENNY as proof that these actions can have positive impacts internally and externally.
- Tristram Stuart: However, a focus on donation should not be front and centre. The focus should first be on managing orders in order to ensure that stores are not ordering more food than necessary.
- Tristram Stuart: Make transparency on food waste figures a priority, do not be afraid to publish figures even if they are not 100% accurate.
- Audience: An idea on how food is sold at the point of purchase would be to introduce non-standard meat portions. Creating variations in different portions sizes at the point of purchase could allow the consumer to choose what he/she needs.
- Tristram Stuart: In the CSR Roadmap that you will draft, I would recommend you to have it centred on SDG 12.3 so that it can be easily communicated on and linked to a well-known initiative.

5.2 QUERFELD

Presentation

- Fruits and vegetables are often not even harvested (too small, too big, too strange looking), hence their amount is usually not included in food waste statistics (e.g. pre-harvest is excluded from SDG 12.3)– therefore we still don't know the size of food waste as a pre-harvest problem
- Trying to address this problem has been difficult in the past, e.g. approaching REWE to sell these fruits has been unsuccessful
- Querfeld therefore now cooperates with kindergartens, bigger companies and catering companies to sell these fruits/vegetables – in turn they are provided with CSR material
- Work only with organic farms because our company values high value products and wants to support individuals who are already environmentally conscious

Challenge question: we need to know how to introduce and impose attainable and easy-to-implement quality standards on the food donated from farmers so that we do not lose time on managing reject orders.

- A main issue and consequence of the absence of quality standards is that farmers have sent vegetable shipments that are partially rotten. Even if only 10% of a vegetable pallet is rotten, because of the contact that the rotten vegetables have with other vegetables, the rotting spreads exponentially and makes all or a large part of the pallet no longer useable. This is a big issue because it makes QUERFELD lose credibility if rotten pallets of vegetables are sent to its clients.

Feedback session

- Valentin Thurn: The best solution would still be that there are not two channels to sell fruits (market conform, non-market conform) but that retailers ease their standards. The communication material created for QUERFELD is of high quality, which makes branding much easier.
- Setting another set of standards is likely a suboptimal solution, but if in practice the delivered quality is very bad then there should be a certain threshold for fruits/ vegetables out of the acceptable spectrum before the delivery is payed.
- Tristram Stuart: Establish a spec sheet which outlines the quality standards needed. Within this spec sheet, a tolerance level for rotten vegetables or fruit could be added. It could be helpful to add pictures so that the spec sheet is quickly understandable.
- Querfeld: The problem is not on our capacity to create a spec sheet, it is on trying to make the pre-selection process for farmers as easy as possible without creating too much burden. We are worried that if we give farmers a spec sheet with strict guidelines on what information to include in shipments, they will get discouraged and not want to work with us.
- Tristram Stuart: You could consider "concurrent harvesting". This type of harvesting was introduced in California and consists of paying harvesters a pre-determined fraction of the cost of normal harvesting to also pick up misshapen fruit and vegetables and separating them into two collection

bins. This will allow farmers to easily separate and classify fruit and vegetables directly on the field, and also increases the harvest yield.

5.3 Wastewatchers

Presentation

- Wastewatchers is a combination of online tool and consultancy
- Different from other monitoring tools: Product is app that's easy to use. Supply knowledge on when, why, and how waste happens.
- If you want to fight food waste you need daily data, needs to be scalable. Chefs also don't have time, if you want to do measurement it can't take a lot of time. It also has to be cheap. We designed a tool without a weighing scale because Dutch chefs will not use it. Or data is not in kg or bins because this is not the approach chefs want. Instead we measure the products
- In general each chef chooses 8 products they think they waste the most, and that's what we measure. We give them the reports and its up to the chefs what to do with it.
- A few things hold companies back from starting with our system. Usual reasons companies give us: they are already monitoring/reducing waste, or they don't have any waste. Often they also don't take us seriously because of our age and lack of a known name, they often think it is a student project. We work with interns now but don't have the resources to fund many employees. So being taken seriously is a challenge.
- Also breaking into the healthcare sector is a challenge
- Challenge question: how do we get companies to take us more seriously, especially with a view to breaking into the healthcare sector more.

Feedback session

- Joost Snels: One possible solution, because research is maybe too old and too established and too focused on fundamental, would be to cooperate more with research/universities, could be good for both.
- Joost Snels: Food waste is negative topic, when you enter a company you are accusing managers of not doing something right. Biggest challenge when looking at hospitality is to take in something positive. Fighting food waste in itself is a nice thing, but what to do with the saved money? Good idea is to have manager say that every penny saved will be reinvested. This is especially important in reaching healthcare. Healthcare wants to make it healthier for patients, especially in long term or elderly care you can make a big impact with this. You can earn the investments to improve quality within own existing budget. Never should be measuring for the sake of measuring, should be to improve the meal, make patients more healthy, then selling tool as solution for this. Malnutrition is really a factor in Europe, that is something to address, and is also a negative thing. FI you fight malnutrition, get happy elderly people, and fight food waste. Need to have constant measurements to get real results.

Group splits into two small tables to discuss the two topics:

- Getting into hospitals:
 - Huge obstacle: how to include the whole hospital
 - To convince people: visualization, put next to it the costs. Need to find one person at the hospital who is engaged for the issue. Doesn't matter in what part of the hospital organization very much, key thing is to get a start with a committed person
 - Don't talk as much about food waste, but talk about healthy or organic food, include this in the business case: better quality as goal, not waste
 - Making it fun by using competition like LWL Münster.
 - Image is important for hospitals: focus on how the tool can improve this. People choose deliberately between hospitals more and more. You can include reviews to patients. This way it helps hospital see what they want to improve and what changes with the intervention
- Being taken more seriously and growing
 - Next step is to identify market need more specifically
 - Focus on communication. What is important to show is the added value, develop a best practice example and really use it in communication (e.g. with testimonials, like in REFRESH contest video)
 - It may be worth it to change the name to something with a more positive focus instead of "waste"
 - More municipalities have green goals they have to achieve, if you show how to help them reduce their waste and how it connects to their existing goals you can gain support of municipalities as partners/connectors

5.4 Zero Waste Aiud

Presentation

- Begins with a game with participants
- Diana Ioana Calin introduces herself and development of Zero Waste Aiud: background in passion for nature and sustainability, environmental engineer, works as consultant, assumes responsibility of making hometown Aiud into transition town. Founded NGO Society for Sustainable Consumption, works for sustainable consumption of resources with respect for people and nature.
- Last year empowered a youth from hometown to participate in youth exchange, gave her homework to come back and start project for community, and not just to go but to take responsibility. Ioana Man went and wanted to start food waste pilot project. Supported to recruit

volunteers and communicate. Big variety of participants, have everything needed to go further, have expertise and passion.

- There were many projects in refresh competition, ours was one of the most simple, the reason we won the public vote was the huge passion and dedication of the community.
- We now collect food from market to feed to poor families.
- Now we want to know: where to next? We want to create a zero waste center. Want to create bistro and bulk food shop without packaging. Should be vibrant place, dedicated to community and to education. Should be place for parents to meet and discuss healthy nutrition, where grannies can sell preserves made from waste. Still have challenge. Now we do not have the financial resources to start. Looking for European or other international financial programmes. We are experienced in writing projects and managing funds, but do not have solution yet.
- **Challenge question:** What are the first steps to take to achieve this goal?

Feedback session

- Alice Codsì: presents examples from other places
 - Brussels: what people do at first is find potential space, who is owner, and how to reach them. Most important thing is group of volunteers ready to do it. You have this, now it will be easier to find space and figure out what you want to do. Then you need to know what the volunteers want to do. Need to empower volunteers who are there if you want them to lead on the project, to avoid burn out.
 - Diana Calin: no space for free yet, but space that can be rented. Ideas in concept are already those from volunteers. Need funding for 2 staff and rent. Can not just be volunteer based because I know this means low quality results and burnout. Want staff to have harmonious way of work and to appreciate staff.
 - Alice Codsì: possibility of funding. Can sell something to get starter money, or do crowdfunding
 - Sophia Bensch: TBYW in similar situation. Difficult to find funding for salaries and ongoing costs, more complex.

Group splits into two small tables to discuss:

Presenting results from groups:

- Group 1
 - Lots of options, recommend starting small to avoid overwhelming costs
 - Might be useful to engage an expert on funding
 - Is there an alternative for space? E.g. working in schools with programmes for kids after school. Schools have facilities, could cook with kids and kids take food home

- Asking sponsorship from companies e.g. kitchenware companies for supplies
- Could also collaborate with existing café, doing one evening a week at existing café
- Lots of people have made this work, there is a network of mentors to tap into
- Group 2
 - Started at crowdfunding: key to successful crowdfunding is a big network, now is good moment to use after having attention from the REFRESH contest. Storytelling is important too which is a strength they have. Also look at other countries and help spread the word
 - They are first in their context, can sell themselves as experts on food waste in Romania
 - Reward crowdfunding is interesting option
 - Crowdfunding could also be time-donation crowdfunding instead of money-donation, or copy cooperative model with structured volunteering with rewards, helps avoid burnout
 - Make a list of what you need, what you want, what would be nice to have
 - Don't have to be negative as activists, can also be positive and work together with mainstream in context of sponsoring with appropriate companies

Break

6 Policy Panels

Group splits into five tables to discuss the following question: Identify success factors and barriers for food waste reduction for retailers, entrepreneurs, social innovators. How can (regional, national, EU) policies help to provide an enabling policy framework?

Highlights from small group discussions:

- Currently on the German national level the Ministry is looking at developing a strategy to tackle food waste
- Incentives need to encourage action: reward success instead of just incentivising to begin

- There is no single policy fix. Discussion at one table focused a lot on date labelling. There was agreement that there should not be a legal obligation to donate, and that all retailers should adopt the practice of selling products close to best by dates for reduced prices instead of sorting them out.
- Food safety is an issue for hospitality leftovers, here regulation change is needed
- Also possibility to encourage increased transparency through policy change. Blame for food waste gets put on households because here numbers are available, other stages of the chain are missing reliable numbers.
- To improve waste in hospitality/catering, incentives can be developed for improving taste/quality
- There was a wish for better coordination among numerous and diverse stakeholders to reduce duplication and improve networks. Awards like Too Good for the Bin or the REFRESH contest are useful to increase internal motivation and share best practices.
- Barriers for success of initiatives/projects include getting through hard times especially at the beginning and burnout. Here more structural support could help (e.g. funding for salaries, rent, or other running costs; provision of spaces)
- Some participants advocated a binding target on food waste at the EU level, and obligations to measure food waste
- An event like today's incubator workshop could be held in connection with the EU Platform on Food Waste and Food Losses meetings to support more collaboration and learning

7 Wrap up and conclusion

- The aim of the day was to meet, create, and do. Now participants are full of information and the connections they need to continue and take their work to the next level.