

FUSIONS

Working towards a 50 per cent drop in food waste

More efficient use of resources and a considerable reduction of food waste in the food chain from field to fork. This is the aim of FUSIONS, a four-year European FP7 project involving universities, knowledge institutes, consumer organizations and businesses. Their ambition is to reduce food waste, by stimulating social innovations in feasibility studies, assessing monitoring methodologies, and developing policy guidelines for national and EU governments. Wageningen UR Food & Biobased Research is coordinator of FUSIONS.

Wageningen UR took the initiative for FUSIONS (Food Use for Social Innovation by Optimising waste prevention Strategies) in response to an open call from FP7, the EU Research and Technological Development Programme. Granted a 4 million Euro and 44 man-year co-finance budget, FUSIONS will contribute to achieving a resource efficient Europe by significantly preventing and reducing food waste. The four-year project started at 1st of August 2012.

It is notoriously difficult to quantify food waste, partly because of the many different methods used within countries and by different stakeholders. Several initiatives to prevent food waste throughout the food chain have already been rolled out in many European countries. FUSIONS is now correlating the knowledge and experienced gained from these initiatives. The collaboration will see 21 partners from 13 countries working together to reduce food waste. It will achieve this through a comprehensive and experienced European partnership covering all key actors across the food supply chain, including regulatory, business, NGOs and knowledge institutes, all with strong links to consumer organisations. FUSIONS will establish a European multi-stakeholder Platform to generate a shared vision and strategy to prevent food loss and reduce food waste across the supply chain through social innovation: new ideas (products, services and models) that simultaneously meet social needs (more effectively than alternatives) and create new social relationships. Already more than 80 front running organisations have pledged their support for FUSIONS.

The overall aim of the project is to contribute significantly to the harmonisation of food waste monitoring, feasibility of social innovative measures for optimised food use in the food chain and the development of guidelines for a common Food Waste policy for EU-27. Utilising the policy and behavioural change recommendations from the delivery of the key objectives, the FUSIONS European multi-stakeholder platform will enable, encourage, engage and support key actors across Europe in delivering a 50% reduction of food waste and a 20% reduction in the food chains resource inputs by 2020. Examples could include uniform labelling addressing sell- or use-by dates, innovations in the chain to improve shelf-life of food products, or creative solutions for behavioural change within stakeholders. It all starts with agreed-upon definitions and a common methodology for referring to the extent of the problem and its drivers.

In November, the kick-off meeting for the project will be organised, followed by the first FUSIONS multi-stakeholder platform meeting in spring 2013. Here the first project results will be presented for discussion.

You can follow us on Facebook (EU FUSIONS) and Twitter (@EU_FUSIONS). The Project website will come available this year.

For more information please contact the coordinators:

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Project details

Title: FUSIONS – Food Use for Social Innovation by optimising waste prevention strategies

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Coordinator: Wageningen UR Food & Biobased Research

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Project members:

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4. SIK (Sweden)
5. INRA (France)
6. BIO Intelligence Service (France)
7. Ostfoldforskning (Norway)
8. Stop Wasting Food / Selina Juul (Denmark)
9. Universität für Bodenkultur Wien (Austria)
10. Institute for Food Research (UK)
11. Food and Agriculture Organisation of the UN - FAO (Italy)
12. IVL (Sweden)
13. MTT (Finland)
14. Hacettepe Universitesi (Turkey)
15. Hungarian Foodbank Association (Hungary)
16. Development Agency of Eastern Thessaloniki's Local Authorities (Greece)
17. Universität Hohenheim (Germany)
18. Last Minute Market (Italy)
19. Koninklijke Ahold (Netherlands)
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