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Raising Awareness Through Actions and Collaborations for Household Food Waste Prevention and Reduction in Greece

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Abstract

One third of the food produced for human consumption worldwide is discarded. According to the latest data of Eurostat (2024), Greece holds the third place amongst the European countries with the highest amount of food waste, naming 201 kg per capita for the year of 2023. The 44.3% of the food waste produced in Greece, originates from households. Thus, it is crucial to develop effective strategies to reduce consumer-level food waste. The “Food Waste Heroes” project focuses on bridging science and society for household food waste prevention through targeted awareness actions and the dissemination of scientific knowledge. Its main objectives are to understand consumer attitudes, perceptions and practices related to food waste through surveys for qualitative and quantitative data collection and promote sustainable food management behaviors through knowledge dissemination activities. To achieve these objectives, online questionnaires targeting different demographic groups have been conducted or are underway to determine the factors that influence household food waste generation, assess purchasing routines and investigate storage practices. In parallel, the project’s public awareness campaign is actively “rolling out”. A dedicated website has been launched along with animated educational videos on a Youtube channel and tailored digital content on social media platforms to make scientific knowledge highly accessible to consumers. Early analytics from these platforms suggest that illustrating the severity of food waste caused by households positively influences consumer attitudes and daily practices. Following feedback from the online consumer survey, a targeted small scale experimental investigation is underway to suggest practical guidelines for households to improve self-life of frequently wasted food. Moreover, upcoming activities, such as interactive school visits, contests, webinars and educational video games, will target younger age groups and HORECA-related sectors to foster more sustainable food-related choices in future generations. On the whole, the project highlights the role of education, communication and behavioral interventions in reducing household food waste.

Keywords: Household food waste, Raising awareness, Food waste prevention, Sustainable consumption

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