

# **Consumer behaviour and food product determinants related to household food waste: A focus on chicken meat products**

<sup>1</sup>Margot Cooreman-Algoed, <sup>2</sup>Fien Minnens, <sup>1</sup>Lieselot Boone, <sup>1</sup>Kyara Botterman, <sup>1</sup>Sue Ellen Taelman, <sup>2</sup>Wim Verbeke, <sup>3</sup>Brecht Devleesschauwer, <sup>2</sup>Yung Hung and <sup>1</sup>Jo Dewulf

<sup>1</sup>*Research Group Sustainable Systems Engineering (STEN), Department of Green Chemistry and Technology, Faculty of Bioscience Engineering, Ghent University, Coupure Links 653, B-9000, Ghent, Belgium*

<sup>2</sup>*Department of Agricultural Economics, Faculty of Bioscience Engineering, Ghent University, Coupure Links 653, B-9000, Ghent, Belgium*

<sup>3</sup>*Department of Epidemiology and Public Health, Sciensano, Rue Juliette Wytsmanstraat 14, B-1050 Brussels, Belgium*

## **Abstract**

Food wastage at home has gained increasing attention, as half of the environmental burdens related to overall food waste are attributed to it in developed countries. Key parameters to define the amount of food waste are consumer behaviour determinants and food product determinants. Nevertheless, research addressing both types of determinants is generally lacking. This study aims to identify household food-wasting segments and analyse the relationship between those and the two types of determinants. Household food-wasting segments are defined based on various percentages of self-reported chicken meat waste. Consumer data has been acquired through a survey on five chicken meat products in a Belgian retail context (n=256). The investigated consumer behaviour determinants comprise sociodemographic characteristics (e.g. household composition), household routines and skills (e.g. planning routines), and motivations and attitudes (e.g. intention not to waste food). The product determinants include product and packaging characteristics, amongst other, the product's shelf life. The results demonstrate that participants who waste little food are significantly older, have no children, and/or are unemployed. These households report having better household routines and skills. They agree more on the intention not to waste food, and experience a greater injunctive norm and perceived consumer effectiveness. Regarding food product determinants, households wasting less chicken buy organic products, products with lower food convenience grades, and shorter shelf life more often. This research emphasises the importance of parameters concerning consumer behaviour and the food-packaging system in quantifying food waste levels in households.

**Keywords:** Food waste, Consumer behaviour, Chicken meat, Packaging, Sustainability