

Household food waste in Italy: the consumer's point of view

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Abstract

Food waste is widespread in several countries and it is a source of concern for the health of the Planet. Specifically, household food waste is one of the main causes that feeds the phenomenon in high-income industrialized countries. In Italy, some studies were carried out on food waste topics such as e.g. the food waste in the outdoor markets (Alfiero et al., 2020), the public initiative to reduce the food waste (Varese and Bonadonna, 2019), the younger generations' awareness as to food waste dynamics (Principato et al., 2015). Moreover, some authors recently investigated the influence of COVID-19 on food waste management and feasible changes on food habits (e.g. Amicarelli et al., 2021). Finally, some studies highlighted main characteristics and several concerns about the household food waste and the related consumers' behaviour (e.g. Gaiani et al. 2018). In this context, the present study aims to investigate the habits and behaviour of a sample of Italian consumers in the purchase, management and consumption of food. The respondents were contacted through social networks with the dissemination of an online questionnaire. The results reveal that the respondents have a certain sensitivity on the main issues of the phenomenon and a widespread interest in wanting to be more informed about the main solutions in order to improve their behaviour and therefore reduce the extent of individual food waste. Furthermore, a multivariate analysis was implemented and some groups of respondents with specific and common characteristics were identified. The evidence that emerged provides a series of useful suggestions for private and public stakeholders to define new actions to be taken and new information tools intended to reduce the household food waste in Italy.

Keywords: household food waste, food, consumer, multivariate analysis

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