

## **Measuring household food waste with a waste audit in Austria, Finland and Greece: Lessons learnt**

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### **Abstract**

Waste audit has been identified in previous literature as the most reliable method for measuring household food waste, compared to diaries or questionnaires (Giordano et al. 2019; 2018). It relies on researchers weighing, quantifying and analysing the composition of the food waste produced by a household over a certain period of time, such as one week. Specific methods in waste audits, however, differ, for example on what types of household organic waste is collected (e.g., including all food waste or only avoidable food waste) and how (e.g., households collecting their waste vs. utilising municipal waste collection) or whether the households will be notified of the collection period before the audit or not. In our paper, we will outline the methods taken to conduct food waste audits in three European countries (Austria, Finland, and Greece). The participating households collected their avoidable food waste for a period of one week at two occasions (about six weeks apart). In between the waste audits, at least one household member used a mobile app related to food management at home. In this paper, the researchers involved in conducting the waste audits reflect on their experiences and the lessons learnt along the way. Our study gives important implications to those conducting food waste audits - what should be taken into account when deciding on the specific method? What kinds of implications does the chosen method have for interpretation of the results?

**Keywords:** food waste, consumer, measurement, waste audit

### **References**

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