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Food waste and losses: case study Republic of Moldova

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Food losses and wastage, correlated to food security, represent current issues for the international and national authorities, having a major importance on the economic, social and political stability for the countries or regions. Food wastage is a current issue for producers, merchants, consumers and the administrative officials. Republic of Moldova spends about 2.3 million tons of food annually, of which over 30% comes directly from the households. Reducing the food waste is a priority at European and national level. Moldovans are wasting about 10% of the purchased food. Republic of Moldova makes efforts in reducing food wastage, especially by implementing community programs regarding the sustainable development of the agro-food system. The paper has researched the causes of food waste production at national level. Households contribute CU 49% on food waste, and 37% come from the food industry. Food retail (7%), catering (5%), and the agricultural sector (2%), have lower shares in food waste. By age group, young people under 35 years spend most of their food. Family size leads to increased waste, and families with underage children have a high level of waste. In terms of household incomes, revenue below 350 euros leads to a level of food waste of about 7%, and revenue growth leads to a proportional level of food waste. Control and food wastage level frequently exceed the capacity of farmers, distributors or consumers because they depend on the global market strategies, on power supply security, on road quality and the presence of some centralized transportation systems. In most cases, the necessary durable solutions in order to reduce the quantity of waste are well-known, the challenge being given by the transfer of know-how and by the creation of a political and social environment which should encourage both the transfer and the implementation of these solutions. Food wastage can be reduced with up to 60% by means of education and technology. The lack of some coherent measures regarding food loss reduction can enhance the phenomenon, and it might have serious economic consequences on food security and on the environment. The results of research could be helpful in supporting strategic decisions on reducing food waste at national and local levels.

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