

Representative survey reveals: One in five consumers wastes food just because they follow date labeling

- **HelloFresh and Kantar questioned over 7,500 participants in Germany, the UK, Belgium, the Netherlands and France**
- **More than 40% of the survey participants are convinced that there is a need for a new food labeling system in order to minimize food waste**
- **The majority is open to a new food labeling system that helps to avoid food going to waste**
- **HelloFresh SE co-initiates alliance to push for approval of innovative time-temperature indicators to minimize food waste**

Berlin, June 29th 2023 – HelloFresh SE (“HelloFresh”), the world's leading meal kit company and integrated food solutions group, published a representative survey¹ among consumers in Germany, the UK, France, Belgium and the Netherlands around food waste and its current labeling system. The results show that on average every second person throws away food at least once or twice a month (UK: 61.3%, NL: 53.8%, BE: 49.0%, DE: 44.1%, FR: 39.3%), every fifth simply because they follow the date labeling on the packaging - regardless of the quality (UK: 28.6%, BE: 20.3%, NL: 19.4%, DE: 13.7%, FR: 13.8%). More than 40% of the survey participants are convinced that there is a need for a new food labeling system in order to minimize food waste (FR: 52.3%, UK: 46.5%, DE: 45.8%, BE: 40%, NL: 35.5%). The majority is open to a new food labeling system that helps to avoid meals going to waste (FR: 92.5%, UK: 90%, BE: 88.2%, DE: 87.1%, NL: 83.6%).

To tackle food waste by helping consumers better understand if products are still edible, HelloFresh joined forces with a broad range of organizations including Keep-It®, Zebra Technologies and Wageningen University & Research to receive regulatory approval for innovative dynamic date marking, such as time-temperature indicators, as an alternative to traditional printed date marking.

Half of the respondents throw away 20 euros worth of food each month

In a global comparison, the main concern why consumers throw away food past the expiration date is because they are afraid that the consumption of food past the expiration date might lead to illness or have other detrimental health effects (FR: 57.0%, UK: 51.7%, BE: 43.7%, NL: 36.8%, DE: 34.0%). Other motivations to dispose of food past the expiration date is because it might not taste as good anymore (NL: 22.0%, BE: 21.8%, UK: 19.5%, DE: 16.4%, FR: 11.4%) and that consumers are simply following the expiration recommendation on the packaging (UK: 28.6%, BE: 20.3%, NL: 19.4%, DE: 13.7%, FR:

¹**Survey methodology:** This online-panel survey was conducted in collaboration with the market research institute Kantar among 7,582 participants in five countries (N=1,500 in the UK, France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany, representative age, gender, and regional quotas) between the ages of 18 to 65. The online interviews took place in the period from May 12th - May 22nd 2023).

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13.8%). Almost every second survey participant is convinced that consumers don't understand how to handle expiration dates correctly and therefore very often throw away food (DE: 57.3%, FR: 49.1%, UK: 45.7%, NL: 45.2%, BE: 44.9%).

A majority holds policy makers responsible for finding ways to minimize food waste

More than 40% of the survey participants are convinced that there is the need for a new food labeling system in order to minimize food waste (FR: 52.3%, UK: 46.5%, DE: 45.8%, BE: 40%, NL: 35.5%). On average, three quarters of the people surveyed agree that policy makers are at least partly responsible (UK: 78.5%, FR: 75%, NL: 71.2%, DE: 71.2%, BE: 70.7%) for enabling change.

In addition, around every second respondent considers themselves fully responsible (DE: 49.6%, FR: 44.8%, UK: 43.8%, NL: 40.3%, BE: 36.8%) to reduce food waste. More than half of the survey participants think there is a need to educate consumers more about how to avoid food waste at home (UK: 63.1%, DE: 60.2%, FR: 59.5%, BE: 56.3%, NL: 53.8%).

HelloFresh pushes for regulatory change for innovative food labeling solutions

The often misunderstood "Best Before" and "Use By" expiration dates lead many consumers to dispose of supposedly spoiled food. HelloFresh believes the innovative alternative solution of the time-temperature indicator (TTI) is key to addressing this change, and has therefore been closely collaborating with [Keep-It®](#). In 2020 and 2021, HelloFresh tested Keep-It's TTI solution amongst more than 3,000 HelloFresh customers in the Netherlands and Germany as part of [a study in collaboration with Wageningen University and Thünen Institute](#). Time-temperature indicators show the shelf life of products in real time, taking into account storage or temperature conditions. [The study proved the label offers a 15% food waste reduction potential](#) and is perceived positively among consumers.

In order to be able to use the innovative TTI food labeling solution there is a need for regulatory change on the EU level. That's why HelloFresh joined forces with other organizations including [Keep-It®](#), [Zebra Technologies](#), [Wageningen University & Research](#), [Rema 1000](#), [Siegwerk Druckfarben AG & Co.](#), [Samen Tegen Voedselverspilling](#), [Across Consult AG](#) and [Buhrs Packaging Technology B.V.](#) and started their engagement by sending an open letter to Executive Vice President of the European Commission Frans Timmermans in December 2022. The letter was supported by in total 30 European companies and organizations from a wide range of food retailers, food producers, packaging manufacturers, trade organizations and research institutions. In May the alliance organized their first joint event in Brussels. In the upcoming months, HelloFresh plans to continue the conversations with national and European policy makers to create awareness for a regulatory change in order to establish labeling solutions like the TTI that help to reduce food waste in private households.

"Our survey showed that fish is one of the top products most likely to be thrown out based on the recommendation on the packaging. This would be the first product we'd like to label with the time temperature indicator to continuously support our customers minimizing food waste while offering

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them a transparent way to ensure the best product quality”, says Tilman Eichstädt, COO Upstream at HelloFresh SE. “The EU is currently working to update date marking, but also each national member state as well as the UK can help by working on pilot projects, such as those already initiated in the Netherlands, to make use of the opportunity to make a change for smarter date coding that helps customers, the planet and companies as well,” says Tilman Eichstädt, COO Upstream at HelloFresh SE.

HelloFresh is committed to fighting food waste across the whole value chain

Reducing food waste continues to be an integral part of HelloFresh's sustainability approach. While HelloFresh substantially reduces household food waste by 38 percent in comparison to traditionally cooked dinners², the company also continuously works on minimizing food waste across its own operations. In 2022 HelloFresh donated 12,040 tonnes of unsold edible food to charities. This represents 53% of our total surplus food.³ Compared to a 2019 baseline, the company managed to reduce the food waste sent to landfill or incineration from all its meal-kit facilities by 42%.

Additionally the Group is already engaged with many local initiatives like [Samen Tegen Voedselverspilling](#) in the Netherlands since 2018 and recently signed a Food Waste Reduction Commitment with the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL) in Germany.

About HelloFresh

HelloFresh SE is a global food solutions group and the world's leading meal kit company. The HelloFresh Group consists of six brands that provide customers with high quality food and recipes for different meal occasions. The Company was founded in Berlin in November 2011 and operates in the USA, the UK, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, Australia, Austria, Switzerland, Canada, New Zealand, Sweden, France, Denmark, Norway, Italy, Ireland and Spain. In Q1 2023 HelloFresh delivered over 278 million meals and reached 8.11 million active customers. HelloFresh SE went public on the Frankfurt Stock Exchange in November 2017 and is currently traded on the MDAX (Mid-Cap German Stock Market Index). The HelloFresh Group has offices in Berlin, Saarbrücken, New York, Chicago, Boulder, London, Amsterdam, Sydney, Toronto, Auckland, Paris, Copenhagen, Milan, Dublin and Barcelona.

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² Source: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959652622035739?via%3Dihub#>

³ [Non-financial report 2022](#).