

## Case Study // Round Table SDG 12: Towards a circular economy: innovation for sustainable value chains

### The food waste management in the Czech Republic

#### Czech Republic

Level: national

#### Summary

Food waste is society-wide problem. According to the European Commission estimations 88 million tonnes of food waste are generated annually in the EU.

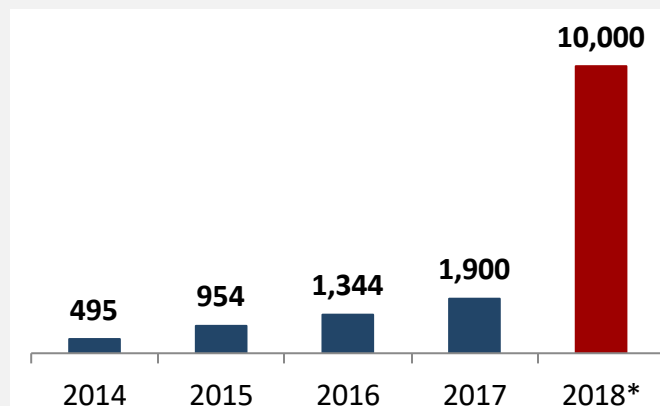
Food waste prevention is an integral part of the European Commission's new Circular Economy Package. It is also one of the targets of UN's Sustainable Development Goals to halve per capita food waste at the retail and consumer level by 2030, and reduce food losses along the food production and supply chains. The Czech Republic is taking the problem of food waste very seriously and fully supports the effort of European Commission and international organizations (namely UNECE and its Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards) to prevent and to reduce food losses along the whole food chain. The following actions have been carried so far:

- Interdepartmental group
- VAT Guidelines
- Food legislation
- Financial support for the food banks
- Using the EC FUSIONS methodology as for measuring of food waste
- The Ministry of Agriculture also takes part at all the European Union food waste meetings, the EU Platform on food waste, Codex Alimentarius and UNECE's Working Party on Agricultural Quality Standards

Seminars and leaflets with aim to help to promote better understanding of "use by" and "best before" dates by consumers

#### Situation

**Volume of donated food in the Czech Republic (tonnes)- (\*expected volume)**





## Strategy

### **Support of food donation (legislative and financial)**

- **Foundation of the interdepartmental group**

In the year 2015, the Ministry of Agriculture of the Czech Republic initiated the foundation of the interdepartmental group and organized regular round tables which are open to all stakeholders (governmental organizations, food banks, charity org., industry, food business operators (FBO).

- **Value added tax Guidelines**

Guidelines were developed for setting a minimum value added tax for donated food. These guidelines are the main outcome of the interdepartmental group and were elaborated by the Ministry of Finance with close cooperation of Czech Federation for food banks.

- **Food legislation**

- Best before date

Food labelled with “best before” date can still be sold after the expiration of this date supposing the products are safe and the consumer receives the information that best before date has expired.

- Food donation

A recent amendment of the Czech Food Law supports to reduce food waste in the Czech Republic. According to this amendment, all retail outlets with a sale surface of more than 400 square metres are from the 1st January 2018 obliged to donate food that is safe but not correctly complying with the requirements of food law (e.g. incorrect labelling, deformed packaging), to the local food banks, charities and non-profit organisations. Retail outlets with a sale surface of less than 400 square metres have the possibility to donate such food, but no obligation. In the both cases, the food must be donated free of charge.

- **Financial support to food banks**

The Czech Federation of Food Banks consists of 14 food banks, which operate in all Czech regions. Food banks cooperate and distribute food to 349 humanitarian organisations. Since 2016 the food banks and charity organisations can apply at the Ministry of Agriculture for a subsidy to support the financing of their running costs and equipment. Organizations can apply for max. 20 000 EUR/year for running costs and for max. 40 000 EUR/year for their equipment (incl. car for food distribution).

## Results and impact

The Ministry of Agriculture has received very positive feedback from the food banks and the other humanitarian organisations regarding help with their investments into warehouses and also significant increase in volume of received food.

## Challenges and lessons learned

There are still not complex result numbers on food waste amount in the Czech Republic. This task we are currently working on remains as a great challenge for the upcoming years.



### Potential for replication

The potential of replication of our actions can be very good – it combines elements tailored to the local circumstances with regional and international elements and best practice. The applied measures cover different areas as food labelling, food donations and governmental grants

And very importantly it is an inclusive approach based on a strong policy commitment and the participation of all stakeholders (public, private, civil society, and academia) in consultations to bring about real and lasting reduction of food loss.

### Contact

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Ministry of Agriculture web page on food waste:

<http://eagri.cz/public/web/mze/potravinny/aktualni-temata/plytvani-potravinami-1/>

Czech Federation of Food Banks:

<http://www.potravinovabanka.cz/>

EU references on food waste and circular economy

[https://ec.europa.eu/food/safety/food\\_waste\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/food/safety/food_waste_en)

[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/circular-economy/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/circular-economy/index_en.htm)

UNECE work on food loss

<http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=44974>

<http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=41409>

[http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/trade/agr/meetings/ge.01/2017/WP7\\_GE1\\_2017\\_02\\_15\\_May.pdf](http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/trade/agr/meetings/ge.01/2017/WP7_GE1_2017_02_15_May.pdf)

Codex Alimentarius on food loss:

<http://www.fao.org/fao-who-codexalimentarius/roster/detail/en/c/428396/>