

Reducing food waste – obstacles experienced in legislation and regulations

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Overview of the presentation

- Background
- Objectives
- Methodology
- Results

Background

- Background:

Dutch companies complained about legislation hampering their efforts to reduce food waste / optimally re-use waste flows

Objectives

Objectives:

1. Which legislation, which regulations encourage food waste or prevent optimal re-use of waste flows?
2. Where in the supply chain?
3. Which amendments to legislation may reduce food waste / encourage optimal reuse of waste streams?
4. What else than change of legislation is needed?

Methodology

- Literature research
- Interviews > 50 people, business and government
- 2 stakeholder workshops
- Information gathered and analysed (WUR team and legal expert)
- Report + feedback on report from stakeholders

Remarks on results

- Food safety is reason for much legislation
- Experience vs actual legislative obstacles
- Knowledge of companies: more possible!
- Legal amendments take time to have effect
- Legal amendments only reduce waste when business circumstances allow for change
- Policies can have counter effects on policies
- Detailed data on food waste vitually absent

Results

- The provision of food information
 - Expiration dates + product liability (and label info)
 - But: knowledge lacks of possibilities
 - And behaviour of companies in setting dates
 - Suggestion: no best before date for stable products?
 - (Extra: food wasted by consumers because of dates)

Results

- Hygiene rules / requirements
 - 2-hour guarantee
 - But: legislation (HACCP) more flexible than thought
 - Exemptions possible but not easy to obtain

Other results

- Contamination of food
 - MRL's: statutory levels versus food safety levels
 - Zero tolerance: >zero can be measured better and better
 - But: private low MRL's because of naming and shaming

Other results

- European marketing standards
 - Even though standards have been eliminated, these standards are still used through private classification systems (time needed to adapt?)
 - Classification system reduces waste? But also results in sub-optimal use of food?

Other results

- Norms and quota in fisheries
 - Many fish discarded with little chance of survival
 - Change the law: 'discards ban'
 - But: how to market previously banned fish?
- Animal by-products
 - Especially recycling food for human consumption from retailers and wholesalers: separation of flows

Other results

- Novel Foods and import controls
 - Long procedures lead to food waste / suboptimal use of food resources

Thank you!

For questions, please contact

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