

## Food Wastage

### Why in news?

The menace of hunger or undernourishment can be mitigated to a considerable extent by curtailing the wastage of raw food and making a better use of the left-over cooked food.

### What is the picture of food wastage?

#### Global picture

- **UNEP Data** - The UNEP index assesses the food lost between harvest and consumption at around 17% of production.
- **FAO Data** - The UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has quantified the overall losses at 1.3 billion tonnes a year.

#### Indian Scenario

- **Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) Data** - One-third of all food in India is spoiled or wasted before it is consumed.
- **UNEP Report** - The Food Waste Index Report 2021 of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) had estimated household food wastage in India at around 50 kg per capita per year.

### What are the major causes of food wastage?

- **Causes of food wastage** - A sizeable amount of food is discarded because of the tendency to buy/ cook more food than can be consumed by the individuals at social events.
- Paucity of refrigeration and cold-storage facilities is also responsible for food spoilage.
- A significant quantity of food (17 %of production) is lost between harvest and consumption.
- The wastage also include losses at supply chain — transportation, storage, and marketing.
- **Need for preventing food wastage** - The prevention of food wastage can help feed 1.26 billion hungry people every year.
- The menace of hunger or undernourishment can be mitigated to a certain extent by curtailing the wastage of raw food and making a better use of the left-over cooked food.

## GLOBALLY, A FIFTH OF ALL FOOD IS WASTED

**5.3 bn tonnes**  
Food available annually for global consumption

**931 million tonnes**  
Food waste (17% of total)



## African Countries Lead Wastage List (Top 5 - Kg/Capita/Year)

### India & selected countries



### What efforts were taken in this regard globally?

- **Section 12.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)** has envisaged halving the per-capita global food wastage by 2030 by improving supply chains and cutting down food losses at retail and consumer levels.
- **France** has enacted legislation requiring supermarkets to either give unsold food to charity or pass it on to farmers for use as animal feed or fertiliser.

### What about the efforts taken by India?

- **IFSA - Indian Food Sharing Alliance (IFSA)** by the FSSAI, seeks to develop a network of food-collection agencies.
- It aims to bring together citizens, food businesses, corporate houses, civil society organisations, volunteers and local bodies to minimise food wastage all across the supply chain
- **Awareness** - Union government has been counselling to states to include a chapter on "Prevention of Food Wastage" in school textbooks to make the children and the youth aware about the need to save food.
- **Policy paper of NAAS** - A policy paper brought out by the National Academy of Agricultural Sciences (NAAS) has made a request for using discarded food as animal feed or converting it into manure.

### References

1. [Business Standard | Sinful waste that needs to be stopped](#)
2. [Times of India | Food Waste Index Report 2021](#)