

Metro Cash&Carry Food Lost&Waste Best Practice

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Through sustainability understanding placed into center of its operations since establishment, Metro attaches importance on prevention of fruit and vegetable wastes and losses with the main idea of preventing loss of products and bringing them back to economy for effective use of existing resources.

25-40 percent of 49 million tons of fruits and vegetables produced in our country today are either lost in production or distribution chain stage, or become waste in sales and consumption stage. According to TÜBİTAK data, 11,6 million tons of product, worth 25 billion, which corresponds to four times of our annual fresh fruit-vegetable export, are incurring loss. Cultural heritages are being lost, taste palette is narrowed, and our animal races extinct due to damages caused to environment and inefficient use of resources. Due to improper fishing, fish species are under threat. Support is needed for potential products that are candidates for geographical indication products.

With awareness that food waste and losses are waste of national resources and in order to create a scientific basis for studies on this matter and to reveal current situation, Metro conducted the first study on "Reducing the Fruit&Vegetable Losses and Wastes in Turkey" in cooperation with TÜBİTAK. Measuring loss rates from harvest to exhibition for fruits and vegetables by comparing good and poor condition practices, the study has revealed that product supplied in poor conditions turn into waste nine times higher compared to products supplied in good condition. Study also showed that it is possible to significantly prevent loss of product through good supply chain practices, and that stages with most frequent losses are packing and shipping.

Firstly, by conducting consumption analyzes, Metro acts upon the target of planned production with right quantity, quality and specification. World class practices have been launched related to right pack, packaging and shipment of products without breaking the cold chain. It supports reduction of losses through trainings and guidance provided. For example, 50% food loss has been prevented, thus wasting of 1.200.000 pieces of weeds was avoided through trainings on correct pesticide use, correct harvesting time etc. to 200 local producers, and launching of packaging and technological investments. Producer trainings still continue. Metro has moved forward with its efforts on preventing food loss and waste, has joined forces with leaders and operators of sector's leading restaurants, and launched Metro Food Initiative. Every year during the Restaurant Week, Gastronomy Partner identity draws attention to issue of food waste and loss both in menus of restaurants and in habits of consumers. "Metro Gourmet Box" is launched in Istanbul and Eskişehir in order to ensure that consumers take away the remaining of food they ordered in order to reduce food waste at restaurants, and tips on preventing waste in 5 steps are provided to consumers. With voluntary involvement of restaurants to the project, contribution to reducing food waste increases, and chefs cooperate for drawing attention to the matter at social media channels.

In order to expand the scope of efforts carried out by Metro by taking example, spread it throughout Turkey, and solving food safety problems in a sustainable way, it is crucial that all stakeholders exhibit a common approach.

Each ring of production, procurement, sales and consumption processes has to perform an internal evaluation and take responsibility.

Responsibilities of consumers in "Food Initiative" part of this study should be taken into account more comprehensively. It is important to carry out information campaigns to ensure that consumers buy right quantity of product according to their need without causing any loss and waste, and to raise awareness about storage and usage conditions at home after buying the product.

Keywords: food safety practices, food loss, food waste