

Don't Waste Food

What is FOOD WASTE?

Food waste or food loss is food that is discarded or lost uneaten. The causes of food waste or loss are numerous, and occur at the stages of production, processing, retailing and consumption. Global food loss and waste amounts to between one-third and one-half of all food produced.



Food waste is a significant problem. According to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, approximately **1/3 of food produced for humans in the world is either lost or wasted.**

Think about that for a moment: 1/3 of the food we produce and all the energy, time, resources (water, land) and money that went into growing it, packaging it and shipping it is wasted.

Current scenario in India for avoid wastage of food



INDIANS waste as much food as the whole of United Kingdom consumes – a statistic that may not so much indicative of our love of surfeit, as it is of our population. Still, food wastage is an alarming issue in India. Our street and garbage bins, landfills have sufficient proof to prove it.

Weddings, canteens, hotels, social and family functions, households spew out so much food. According to the United Nations Development Programme, up to 40% of the food produced in India is wasted. About 21 million tonnes of wheat are wasted in India and 50% of all food across the world meets the same fate and never reaches the needy. In fact, according to the agriculture ministry, Rs. 50,000 core worth of food produced is wasted every year in the country.

In 2013 World Environment Day campaign was on 'Think Eat Save'. It was an anti-food wastage and food loss campaign aimed at reducing the wastage footprint. India ranks 63 among 88 countries in Global Hunger Index. Wastage of food is not indicative of only hunger or pollution, but also many economic problems in the economy, such as inflation. Only government policies are not responsible for the problems we are facing today, but our culture and traditions are also playing a lead role in this drama. In India, the bigger the wedding, the larger the party and the more colossal the waste.

Why is food wastage a problem?

- 25% of fresh water used to produce food is ultimately wasted, even as millions of people still don't have access to drinking water. When you calculate the figures in cubic kilometres, this is a bit more than an average river.
- Even though the world produces enough food to feed twice the world's present population, food wastage is ironically behind the billions of people who are malnourished. The number of hungry people in India has increased by 65 million more than the population of France. According to a survey by **Bhook (an organization working towards reducing hunger)** in 2013, 20 crore Indians sleep hungry on any given night. About 7 million children died in 2012 because of hunger/malnutrition.
- Acres of land are deforested to grow food. Approximately 45% of India's land is degraded primarily due to deforestation, unsustainable agricultural practices, and excessive groundwater extraction to meet the food demand.
- 300 million barrels of oil are used to produce food that is ultimately wasted.

Food Wastage in Indian Weddings and Parties



In every Indian wedding, food is the most important part and the most wasted too! In India, statistics related to food wastage at weddings have been quite shocking, given the fact that it is the same country where countless number of people has to survive without the basic necessity of two meals a day. Following list will give you an idea as to how much food is actually being wasted.

Please read some important facts:

1. As the ranks of India's wealthy surge with rapid economic growth, many families are staging extravagant displays of food at their children's weddings to show off their newfound affluence.
2. About one-fifth of the food served at weddings and social gatherings is discarded. The prodigious waste that follows has horrified many in a country where food prices are skyrocketing and tens of millions of young children are malnourished.
3. Guests invited in weddings are mostly responsible for the food wastage because of different thoughts, mostly they have the fear that if they go second time to take the food they won't get it, for the first time they have seen the food they have never eaten before or due to lack of education they do not realize that if they take extra food it will get wasted.
4. Around 100,000 weddings and social events are held in India every day. Food wasted each day at weddings and family functions in Mumbai alone would be enough to feed the city's vast slum population.
6. Some 15-20 per cent of food is wasted in marriages and various such social functions. In some cases, the waste is to the extent of 20-25 per cent when the number of dishes exceeds the number of guests invited to the marriage halls.

The wastage of food in social gatherings in India is at an alarming rate and needs to be looked at immediately. One should opt for various ways to avoid such exorbitant wastage. The next time you savour a wedding feast, spare a thought for the masses which go without two square meals a day!

How to Dispose of Food

Whether cooking at home or eating out, people tend to waste a lot of food. Throwing out food responsibly is important, because when food rots, it releases methane, a greenhouse gas that is dangerous to the environment. Dispose of food recycling and composting organic materials, and giving away what you can to charity, and putting other food in the trash. You should also try to take what steps you can to minimize your food waste.

- 1) Recycling and Composting Food Waste**
- 2) Donating Unwanted Food**
- 3) Disposing of Non-Reusable Food Waste**
- 4) Storing Food Scraps for Later Disposal**
- 5) Reducing Your Food Waste**

1) Recycling and Composting Food Waste



Compost at Home



Visit your local recycling Centre



Food Waste Scheme

2) Donating Unwanted Food



Local Charity



Contact Local Charities



Donate to Grocery Store

3) Disposing of Non-Reusable Food Waste



Separate Spoiled Food



Incinerator Items with low water Content



Flush items down the sink

4) Storing Food Scraps for Later Disposal



Be careful about putting out waste
For disposal too early

Chop the food up into small
enough pieces to fit into the
Jar.

Alternatively, freeze items for later

5) Reducing Your Food Waste



Store Food Effectively

Shop Smart

Make the most of Leftovers

Which countries waste the most food?

With the world's population projected to reach 9.6 billion by 2050, and with most of this growth taking place in the developing world (more than half of it in Africa), the challenge for governments around the world is, how do we produce enough food for everyone?

The answer, **according to the United Nations**, is not to produce more food, but to stop wasting so much of what we already have.

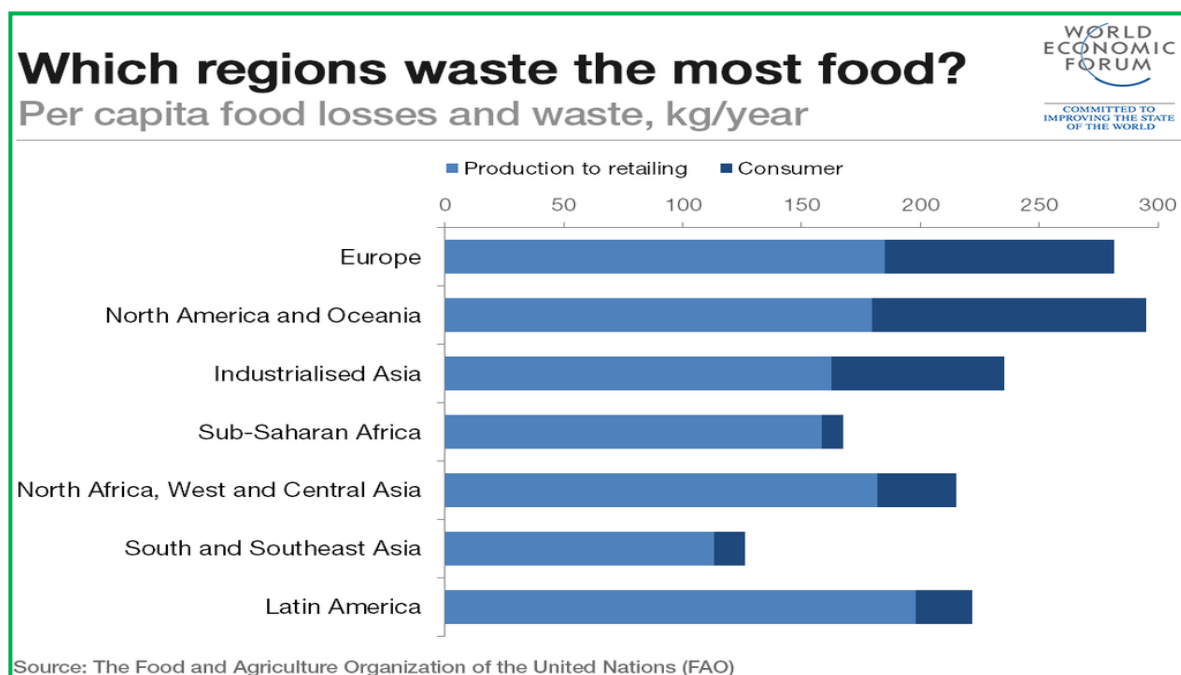
The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) estimates that, each year, one-third of all food produced for human consumption in the world (around 1.3 billion tons) is lost or wasted. This includes 45% of all fruit and vegetables, 35% of fish and seafood, 30% of cereals, 20% of dairy products and 20% of meat.

Not surprisingly, most of this wastage occurs in the developed world; per capita food waste by consumers (not including the production process) in Europe and North America is around 95-115kg per year, compared to just 6-11kg in sub-Saharan Africa and South/South-East Asia. Large amounts of food are still lost during the production process in developing countries, however, due to lack of infrastructure and poor equipment. Wastage at the consumption stage in these countries, meanwhile, is drastically less than developed nations.

Food loss and waste also has a significant impact on the environment. The carbon footprint of wasted food is estimated at 3.3 gigatonnes. In fact, if food waste were a country, it would rank behind only the US and China for greenhouse gas emissions. The production of wasted food also uses around 1.4 billion hectares of land – 28% of the world’s agricultural area. A huge amount of surface or groundwater – known as “blue water” – is also lost; about 250km³, more than 38 times the blue-water footprint of US households.

So which countries and regions are the worst offenders?

The following table shows per capita food loss and waste, at consumption and pre-consumption stages, in different regions around the world. More information on how the regions are grouped is available [here](#).



What percentage of food produced in India is wasted due to improper storage?

When it comes to wasting food items, India is ahead of China, says a UN report on food waste and its impact on natural resources.



Globally, one-third of the food produced is wasted, costing the world economy about \$750 billion (more than Rs 47 lakh crore), the Rome-based Food and Agriculture Organization's report said. It said Asian countries, especially India and China, were the worst culprits causing loss of 1.3 billion tonnes of food every year.

India is a significant contributor on account of both pre and post-harvest waste in cereals, pulses, fruits and vegetables.

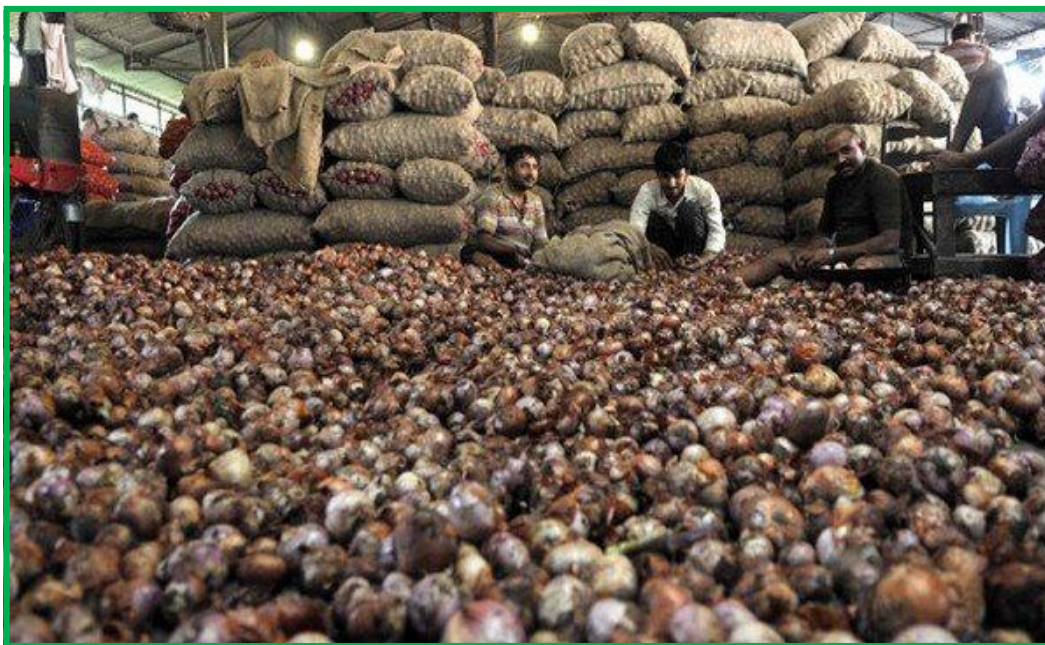
Agriculture produce to the tune of Rs. 58,000 Crore 40% of the total produce---was wasted every year in the country.



In terms of overall food waste—agricultural produce, poultry and milk—India ranks seventh, with the Russian Federation at the top of the list. India's lower ranking is because most of the countries ranking above it utilize much of their land in raising poultry, while a major chunk of land in India is under agriculture. That is why the highest wastage of cereals, pulses, fruits and vegetables occurs in India.

Meat accounts for just four percent of the food wastage but contributes 20% in the economic cost of the wastage. Wastage of vegetables and fruits is 70% of the total produce, but it translated into only 40% of the economic losses.

Also, rice crop emits methane, a potent global warming gas, because of the decomposition of organic matter in submerged paddy fields. Therefore, its wastage means bigger environmental impact, the report added.



Main reason behind this is inappropriate supply chain management and lack of basic facility to store the foods. As per a survey by IIM Kolkata, only 10% foods get cold storage facility in India. Though Indian government is proactively working to tackle the situation then also it is a huge challenge for a country like India to waste so much of food when many people is spending days in poverty and hunger.

We waste so much food that...

It's hard to believe! This contributes to excess consumption of freshwater and fossil fuels. One ton of food waste prevented can save 4.2 tons of CO₂ equivalents.

Top 3 facts about food wasted

- 1) **We must re-connect with the effects of our consumption**
Some people show alarming levels of ignorance with regard to food-related issues. In a survey, most urban consumers who were interviewed did not realize that meat and dairy come from living animals that use natural resources.
- 2) **Food waste = water waste**
Food production requires water. In the United States, food waste accounts for 25 percent of the country's water use. Throwing food away is like leaving the tap running in the country where the food was produced - and an increasing number of areas are suffering from water shortages.
- 3) **A mind-blowing potential**
the food wasted by the United States and Europe alone could feed the world 3 times over.

Source:

<http://thecsrjournal.in/food-wastage-in-india-a-serious-concern/>

<https://www.wikihow.com/Dispose-of-Food>

<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2015/08/which-countries-waste-the-most-food/>