

FOOD WASTE LEVEL IN ROMANIAN HOUSEHOLDS

OANA MIHAELA DUMITRU¹, MARIAN ADASCĂLULUI¹

¹National Institute of Research & Development for Food Bioresources – IBA Bucharest, 6 Dinu Vintilă str., 021102, Bucharest 2, Romania

INTRODUCTION

The objectives of the research were to reveal the determinants of food waste at the level of the domestic consumption, in 2020. The group of urban consumers, adults, maintaining the presumption, according to which rural consumption is predominantly subsistence, with a large circularity of food resources (surplus human consumption is redirected to animal feed, compost, etc.).

The present study is assessing the Romanian consumers food waste impact in 2020, based on data from a national wide urban areas statistically representative group.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The data collection for final consumers was carried out between 11 and 12 May 2020. A total of 991 questionnaires were applied to the urban population residing in Romania during the research. The final sample is representative for the urban population in Romania aged 18 and over.

The respondents were interviewed through Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) method, with an average call duration of 12,3 minutes.

The margin error is +/-3,1%.

Data collection was performed through telephone interviews (CATI method - Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) by IRES call center operators. The RDD (random digit dialing) method was used to generate telephone numbers, and the respondents were contacted and the questionnaire was administered through the IRES call center software system.

The application of the questionnaires and the observance of the quality criteria were verified by the team of supervisors dedicated to the project, by listening to the conversations in real time and by following the individual activity reports, at the level of each call center operator involved in the project. The average duration of the questionnaires is 12.3 minutes. 21589 calls were generated for the application of the 991 questionnaires.

RESULTS

Target group structure

The age percentiles indicate 25% of the group under 25 y.o., 50% under 48 y.o. and 75% under 63 y.o. Gender distribution is male/female: 47,7% / 52,3%.

Main education level is high school (35%), and 75% have no higher than college education

Food waste findings

67,2 % of the respondents consider they are wasting up to 5% of their food. 17,6 % admitted to waste between 11 – 20% and 57 respondents consider they are wasting over 20% of their purchased food. The mean value of the weekly quantity of food wasted is 0,4557 kg/household

Determinants of food waste

The female respondents seem to have a more responsible food waste behavior than male population. Age correlations indicate the group of respondents over 65 years old are more likely to pay attention to food consumption. Young adults (<35 years old) and middle age respondents are more likely to waste food

Data indicate that larger households are more responsible in managing their food resources, their level of food waste being under the mean value of 4,557%

CONCLUSIONS

The present study is a follow-up surveille of Romanian consumers behavior on food waste generation. It is meant to support national efforts in reducing the food waste impact on the food chain, from farm to fork.

The 2020 median level of food waste in urban households is 6,5%. This is significantly lower from the previous 2016 determination of 10,4%.

The respondents appreciate a certain reducing tendency in food wasting (43,5%), but the general trend is rather constant (52,4%).

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