



Food wastage in India

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Abstract

India is a major food producer in the globe, but it still has problems with waste and food security. An estimated 194 million Indians go without food every day, while the nation wastes \$14 billion worth of food every year. The primary causes of food waste in India are discussed in this article, including trash from households, food surplus purchases, waste from weddings and events, and waste from hotels and markets. People can take action to address this problem by planning meals, storing excess food, eating locally and seasonally, keeping a waste log, sharing surplus food, and shopping wisely. Governments and organisations are also attempting to feed the hungry and limit food waste. India can provide food security for all by reducing food waste and implementing simple measures."

Introduction

Food security is the state in which all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to enough safe and nutritious food that satisfies their dietary needs and food choices for an active and healthy life, according to the United Nations Committee on World Food Security. The effects of a changing climate, an expanding world population, rising food prices, and environmental stressors on food security over the next few decades will be substantial yet quite unpredictable. Food shortages are occurring in India as a result of improper management of harvested vegetables, grains, and food transportation and storage. The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations estimates that 194 million Indians go hungry every day, despite the country wasting \$14 billion worth of food annually, according to official statistics. One of the biggest food producers in the world, India is attempting to reduce waste in the areas of production, processing, retailing, and consumption by supporting internal efforts and forming alliances with foreign investors on technology and best practices. However, a lot of people who are having trouble eating enough food worry that India, which was rated 100 out of



119 nations in the 2017 Global Hunger Index with 14.5% of the population undernourished, is not making enough progress.

How we are wasting food?

These are the main ways that millions of people's worth of precious food is wasted. Such waste also affects the environment directly and indirectly. Take a look at how much food we squander. The primary reason is the one I alluded to in the start. the food waste we were causing at home. This is especially true when we have people over for supper and they don't eat as much as we had anticipated. The purchase of packaged and divided food is the second major source of waste. Fast food and breakfasts make up the majority of this type of food. People purchase such food, are unable to consume it all, and then discard it with the plastic wrapping still in place. The purchase of packaged and divided food is the second major source of waste. Fast food and breakfasts make up the majority of this type of food. People purchase such food, are unable to consume it all, and then discard it with the plastic wrapping still in place. The third reason, which contributes to sin a little more than the other two, is events like weddings and celebrations. The food served at weddings and other events is typically expensive and of excellent quality. Out of greed, the partygoers attend more events than they can handle. Throughout the meal, they heap all the food on their plates. In the end, they wind up throwing most of the food on their dish into the trash and then, shamelessly, picking up the plate full of expensive food. This food waste is just tossed away. The large hotels and restaurants here are the other culprits. The hotels receive their food in bulk and also dispose of their rubbish in bulk. They discard ingredients that they no longer need because fewer clients are placing orders for them. This type of waste coming from large hotels also adds significantly to the waste. Markets also contribute significantly to food waste. There may always be incidents or accidents at the local markets where fruits or vegetables are thrown into the walkways and squandered. Well, these are some of the major causes of the food wastage in India at present and there may be other causes too.

Controlling methods



At home

The No Wastage Challenge – Your Action Plan

1.Shop Smart and Realistically

This may seem easy, yet it's among the most crucial things you can do. Determine your exact needs and avoid overspending. Most produce that appears deformed can still be eaten, so don't be hesitant to purchase it. Keep in mind that going on shopping sprees out of boredom will limit impulsive purchase. You can end yourself with far more than you really need after such shopping.

2. Practice FIFO (First In, First Out)

Additionally, when it comes to food storage, out of sight, out of mind. First in, first out, or FIFO, is an abbreviation that serves as a reminder to eat perishables in the order that they were acquired. As you unload groceries, place newer items in the rear of the refrigerator and older items in the front. By doing this, you increase your chances of seeing the older food items and finishing them before they spoil.

3. Freeze to Make Them Last

When you have excess food, freeze it before the surplus has a chance to rot or go stale. Keep and place a list of what's in the freezer and when each item was frozen on the freezer door for easy reference. This makes it easy to use items before they pass their prime

.4. Plan a Weekly Grocery List

Make a thorough grocery list and schedule a regular time to plan your meals so you only buy what you need. To determine what you need to utilise, start by opening your kitchen cabinet, refrigerator, and freezer. Next, develop a checklist of the meals you want to prepare with these ingredients and add necessary items to the grocery list. Bring this list with you and make sure you follow it while you shop. Avoid being tempted by promotional offers to purchase more than you actually need!

5. Use-It-Up Meals

Instead of cooking a new meal, designate at least one dinner each week as a “use-it-up” meal.



Look around in the cupboards and fridge for leftovers and other food that might otherwise get overlooked. A few simple tweaks and you can transform your leftovers into a novel dish. You can also create an “eat me first” box for quick-to-expire ingredients and foods.

6. Make A Waste Log

To avoid repeating your mistakes in the future, keep track of what you're throwing away by writing and maintaining a waste record. If the same foods are being thrown out frequently, write down when you should eat them, purchase less of them, use them in more dishes, or freeze them. You may also help yourself remember just how expensive food waste is by making a list of everything that is thrown away and writing down the price of each item.

7. Eat Local and Seasonal

Fresh food has a longer shelf life, a fact that can reduce food wastage. The farm-to-fork approach, in which local and seasonal produce is preferred over packaged products, also has many other benefits. Seasonal food offers a better taste and is more affordable, while local produce provides longer freshness, reduces the miles travelled by food (cutting down emissions) and benefits the local farmers and communities.

8. From soogy to Smoothie

It's not always necessary to throw out fruits and vegetables just because they're past their prime or don't look perfect. Vegetables that are about to wilt can be turned into tasty soups or bakes, and soft or soggy fruits can be turned into healthy smoothies or utilised in pastries.

9. Learn the Label Lingo

It may surprise you to learn that printed food expiration dates aren't governed by law. Expiration dates are often manufacturers' recommendations for optimal quality; they have nothing to do with food safety. Most foods last longer if stored correctly. Not at their freshest, but still edible after the use-by date. Although you shouldn't entirely disregard food labels with expiration dates, if it seems, smells, and tastes fine, it is usually safe.

10. Become a Zero-Waste Chef



When cooking, use every piece of whatever food you're cooking with, whenever possible. Skins, leaves, and stems often provide additional nutrients for our bodies. Do a little research to learn what you can do with all that food you thought was useless. For example, sauté cauliflower stems along with the florets, add vegetable/meat scraps to homemade stocks, and use citrus fruit rinds and zest to add flavour to other meals. Carrot, radish, and beet greens are also delicious, either sautéed or raw in a salad.

11. Share the Surplus

Don't throw away food that you end up not being able to consume. Rather, distribute it to your neighbours, colleagues, and coworkers; they will probably appreciate the money and time you save them.

Here's another way sharing can help you cut down on waste. According to a research conducted by the Indian government's Food Ministry, 20% of the food served during social gatherings like weddings and celebrations is wasted. If you are involved in any such gathering, get in touch with any of the many Indian charities that provide leftover food from restaurants and catered events to the underprivileged.

12. Make a Food Bank Donation

One excellent method to cut down on waste and support local food insecurity is to donate extra food that you won't be using. In addition to fighting poverty and malnutrition, India has a number of food banks that also seek to reduce food waste and protect the environment. They operate under the theory that diverting surplus food might have a significant impact rather than producing fresh food to feed the underprivileged.

13. Feed Table Scraps to Animals

If you have table or kitchen scraps that will go to waste, you may want to consider feeding them to hungry animals. Taking out time to feed these starving animals is better and kinder than just dumping your table scraps. Also, many farmers happily accept food scraps for feeding their livestock. A little kindness on your part can go a long way towards making other living beings happier.



Others

Governmental Measures to Cut Down on Waste

Do you know about the 1960 Guest Control Order? In the wake of Chinese incursion and the Bengal famine, it was instituted to control the number of people attending weddings or social gatherings. The Jammu and Kashmiri government has started a similar project. In an effort to reduce food waste throughout the supply chain, the Indian government launched the creation of food parks in 2008. A direct connection between the farm, processing, and markets is made possible by food parks. Recently, the Marriages (Compulsory Registration and Prevention of Wasteful Expenditure) Bill, 2016—a private member bill—has attempted to regulate the amount spent on weddings. The bill appears to be more concerned with reducing costs than food waste. It is only to be hoped that food waste control would also be included at weddings. It remains to be seen if the bill passes in a nation where only 14 private member bills have become laws to its credit. All throughout the world, governments are implementing admirable and easily adjustable policies. When you were at a restaurant, did you ever ask for a doggy bag? People rarely ask for one, usually out of embarrassment. It's interesting to note that restaurants in Scotland receive complimentary doggy bags from the government. In France, it is legally required for restaurants to give their patrons doggy bags. There is a food waste store in the UK that offers food that supermarkets and restaurants enterprises, depending on your level of comfort. The supermarket is a vital resource for several families and is a part of a bigger initiative to combat hunger and divert food waste from landfills. Lastly, while food loss can be completely eradicated by legislation, the majority of food waste can be reduced with awareness and a little care.

Organization

Feeding india which was founded with the object of eliminating hunger, aims to connect hunger and food waste as solutions for each other. It believes in feeding mouths, not bins. They collect the food waste from individuals, weddings, canteens, and other events and redistribute it to the



needy, free of cost. Anyone can get involved to donate and become a volunteer. Started in 2014, it now operates in more than 30 cities across India and has served more than 1.4 million meals.

Robin Hood Army, a similar organisation, operates not only in India but also in Pakistan.

If you can spare 100 rupees, head to GiftAMealInIndia, a monthly initiative started by Faraz Ansari in Mumbai, or join hands with Harsh Mittal, Founder of Let's Spread Love, an initiative that hosts Let's Feed Bangalore, an activity that feeds those in need.

Conclusion

In conclusion, food waste in India is a complicated problem that needs to be approached from several angles. We can lower the astounding amounts of food wasted annually by being aware of the causes of food waste and acting as a group. Governments, organisations, and individuals must collaborate to put solutions in place that reduce food waste along the whole supply chain. We can guarantee that excess food is distributed to those who need it most, lowering hunger and malnutrition in India, with increased awareness, education, and legislative improvements. Together, let's cut down on food waste and build a more sustainable and food-secure future for everybody.

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