

# THE STORY OF PHENIX

## ZERO WASTE CONSUMPTION & PRODUCTION

# # 5

In 5 years, PHENIX has saved 30.000 tonnes of products from the bin and distributed 60 million meals across France. A winning solution that effectively prevents waste, creates jobs and makes businesses and individuals save money while helping charities.





## CONTEXT

One third of our food is wasted on a global level. In France only, 10 million tonnes of edible food go to waste every year. Beyond the appalling waste of resources highlighted by these figures, food waste raises three key issues. First, an environmental one: food waste in France accounts for 15.3 million tonnes CO2 equivalent, as much as one third of the french passenger cars emissions. Second, it causes a significant waste of money, estimated between 12 and 20 billion euros per year. Finally, while in the country 1 person out of ten struggles to put food on their table, throwing food away seems less and less acceptable. But how to effectively tackle this problem? PHENIX was created in 2014 with the goal to fix the environmental, economic and hunger problems by turning waste into a resource.

## HOW IT ALL STARTED

When the entrepreneurs Baptiste Corval and Jean Moreau realised that on average, more than 900 tonnes of edible food were thrown away by supermarkets on a daily basis, they decided to take action. What they wanted was simple: helping businesses fighting food waste. **Throwing away should become the exception, and products should always have a second life.** First they created the PHENIX Connect platform to put businesses having food surplus in contact with structures able to use this supply, second they moved forward creating a complete support service.

With this innovative system, PHENIX has quickly become the leader in business-to-business waste prevention services. Today, the social company counts over 1.500 receiving organisations - charities of

all sizes, solidarity groceries, farms, zoos, discounters or recycling facilities - which benefit from donations from more than 1.000 clients.

They are working alongside manufacturers, producers, neighbourhood, shops, producers, supermarkets, restaurants, wholesalers, event organisers, and industrials with the aim to reuse or recover 100% of the overflow and unsold products. Based in Paris, their quick growth enabled them to open 24 local offices in France, 2 in Portugal, 3 in Spain, and 1 in Switzerland and to hire more than 100 people. **So far, thanks to their initiative, 30.000 tonnes of waste have been recovered or repurposed, and more than 60.000.000 meals distributed.**



## WHAT DOES PHENIX OFFER?

PHENIX provides businesses with a comprehensive support for surplus, unsold products and waste management. They are the only point of contact the companies need to have a complete solution, be it long-term or ad hoc. Their local actors establish partnerships with charities or other receiving structures, according to the type of products available, evaluate the practices and potential improvements, train the employees, and coordinate the collections. Today, PHENIX is expanding its activity by launching its own shops, 'NOUS anti gaspi', and other innovative solutions to effectively reduce food waste.

### Solutions for waste prevention and reduction

#### PHENIX Connect

After a diagnosis phase, in which PHENIX's local actors select the appropriate receiving structure(s), the client - be it a producer, a restaurant or a grocery shop - has access to the online platform PHENIX Connect. It allows them to report the products they have left at the end of the day and their amount in a very simple way. **The receiving organisations are informed about what is available in real time and can pick up what they need on a schedule established during the diagnosis.** The role of this system is also to free companies from the paperwork related to food donations: administrative processes, operational and financial reportings and compliance with health and legal standards (expiry date, cold chain, traceability, etc.). Relieved from this burden,

businesses are more prone to donate food.

#### 'Dynamic pricing' & Easyturn

**But, PHENIX does not only reduce waste, it helps preventing it.** The joint solution of Easyturn and 'Dynamic pricing' avoids having unsold products. With Easyturn, supermarkets have a digital tool to track products that are about to expire: each new product entering the shop is scanned and registered in the app. When the expiration date gets close, the employees are alerted. That is when the Dynamic pricing solution steps in: a tool to manage discounted products and a dedicated sales area with a specific label is set up to draw the attention of the consumer on these products with reduced prices.

Moreover, shops are able to adapt their orders to the suppliers, given the type of products that are often left on the shelves, identified through the app.

#### 'NOUS anti-gaspi' shops and 'Les Gueules Cassées' label

Following this idea, PHENIX created its own grocery shops called 'NOUS anti-gaspi', specialised in selling products with short expiry dates, fruits and vegetables having appearance or size defects, downgraded, or from overstocks. NOUS buy these unwanted products from supermarkets and large brands, but also from local producers or small engaged companies such as vegetable producers or Zero Waste shops. Everyday, they receive surprise batches depending on the surplus of their providers while the regular supply is ensured by some businesses which have more or less the same daily unsold amount

(especially for fresh food such as dairy products and meat). Finally, they often have 'exceptional products', arriving in the shop for special reasons. NOUS provides consumers with the opportunity to discover new products and an alternative to discounters, since these quality goods are on average 30% cheaper than in a usual supermarket. Regular shops willing to sell these goods can use the 'Gueules Cassées' toothless-apple label. This sticker is there to notify the client of the discount and type of product: 'as good but cheaper'. **For every purchased item, one cent is given to charities to support their action.**

#### 4. PHENIX app

With the PHENIX app, it is now possible for individuals to buy all kinds of products that would normally go to waste from the shop next to their home or workplace. For 20€ per month, they can subscribe to a weekly 3kg basket. They can also buy a basket once in a while for 6€ by checking on the app what is available around them. PHENIX takes a 1€ commission per basket sold. Since consumers do not know beforehand the products they are going to receive, the app initiated a partnership with another French app called 'Save Eat', which gives recipes ideas according to the ingredients you have left at home. "We are particularly optimistic about our new app, says Jean Moreau. Consuming habits are changing really quickly and this solution is a fantastic tool to empower every European citizen, and have them play a decisive role in the fight against food waste."





## Solutions for waste management

### The SmartWaste model

Once everything has been done to prevent food from going to waste, PHENIX is also here to support businesses on waste management and administration, from the organisation of waste disposal to waste reporting and invoicing. The constant research of new recycling or reuse opportunities for waste is also part of the offer, in order to always get the best potential out of waste. For instance, PHENIX gives the possibility to transfer fruits or vegetables that are too damaged or over-ripe to be eaten by humans to close educational farms or zoos. Others are turned into alcohol, have their pigments used for paint or their peels transformed into candy.

### A WINNING INITIATIVE

#### Businesses

For a business, collaborating with

PHENIX first means **optimising its budget and creating value out of waste.**

By implementing Easyturn, a supermarket has an overview on the products that are regularly left on the shelves and about to expire, and can consequently adapt the quantities they buy. Then, with 'dynamic pricing', shops manage to find buyers for 95% of the labelled products and receive up to 80% of the money which would otherwise have been completely lost.

The 'Les Gueules Cassées' label and 'NOUS anti-gaspi' shops give manufacturers and farmers the opportunity to sell their surplus and downgraded goods at a fair price instead of throwing them away, assuming the cost for storage and disposal (between 100 and 200€ per tonne).

Via the PHENIX Connect platform, both shops and producers benefit

from a tax exemption of 60% on food donations to charities. **And finally, reducing waste implies reducing waste management costs: producers reduce their biowaste bill up to 90%.**

This procedure is very time-efficient for the customer because PHENIX handles the whole solution, from the administrative and legal processes to the logistics, along with the health and legal standards. Indeed, shop employees even save time, since the Easyturn device reduces the time needed to treat a product to 30 seconds each.

Furthermore, tools like **the PHENIX app give visibility to small, local businesses so individuals discover other shops in their neighbourhood.** These alternatives to their usual supermarket are actively fighting food waste and working with local charities, which creates a positive image for the consumer, and thus attracts more people.

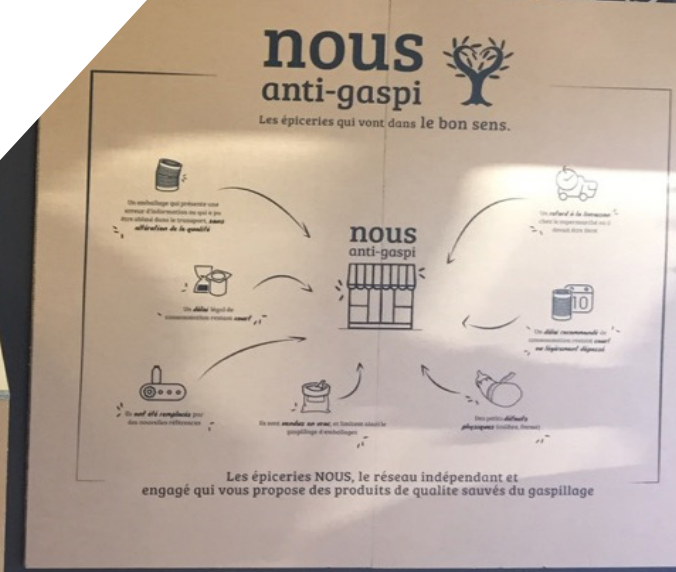


PHENIX Connect unlocks a new source of quality products for free, from local businesses. This ensures more security in the donation amounts, and gives them more time to dedicate to their main mission: help people in need. While growing, PHENIX could become the first actor in food distribution to those in need. They thus need to make sure to preserve and support the existing local structures which are able to go beyond distribution and ensure social and professional reintegration.

To raise awareness among individuals and encourage them to become actors in fighting food waste, PHENIX organises volunteering events or contests: 'Salades solidaires', which consists in cooking fruit salads with ingredients saved from the bin, contests to imagine and design meals with surplus food, etc. During these events, they also discover the benefits of shopping differently. In the 'NOUS anti-gaspi' grocery shops, prices are

Besides, through the PHENIX app, people do not only save money, they discover new vegetables, new ways of cooking and (re)connect with their local grocer, **becoming conscious consumers with an increased purchasing power.**

Thanks to the commission taken from the value created out of waste, PHENIX keeps expanding. Since their system is based on interactions at the local level, **they generate new jobs that are sustainable, local and non relocatable.** When it comes to food donations, a part of the avoided expenses through tax exemption, goes to social businesses. And with a doubled turnover each year since 2014, PHENIX does not intend to stop here. Within their





## THE CHALLENGES

In spite of this success, fighting food waste in France remains very challenging for various economic and legal reasons.

Many companies do not see the point of partnering with PHENIX. Since the waste disposal tax is distributed among all inhabitants, in most places, it is more cost-effective to throw everything away as residual waste, regardless of the type of waste. From a sheer economic perspective, it does not make sense to handle their waste differently: working with PHENIX to

prevent waste and improve waste management seems like a waste of time for an economic return that they do not see in the first place.

Under this traditional waste management system, effectively reducing food waste at the production and distribution level is not possible. Hence, **implementing incentives for businesses to pay for the waste they produce is key in fighting food waste**, and consequently in reducing CO2 emissions and unnecessary use of resources. Implementing the 'polluter pays' principle could contribute to level the playing field between the two waste management

systems. By taking into account elements like the amount of waste generated and its type, waste fees would encourage businesses to turn to good and innovative initiatives such as PHENIX, while making cost distribution of waste management fairer.

At national and European level the lack of targets for reduction of food waste means that the fight against it is still missing a fundamental pillar. PHENIX proves that it is possible to reduce food waste and keep track of it, hence making food waste reduction targets enforceable.



## LOOKING FORWARD

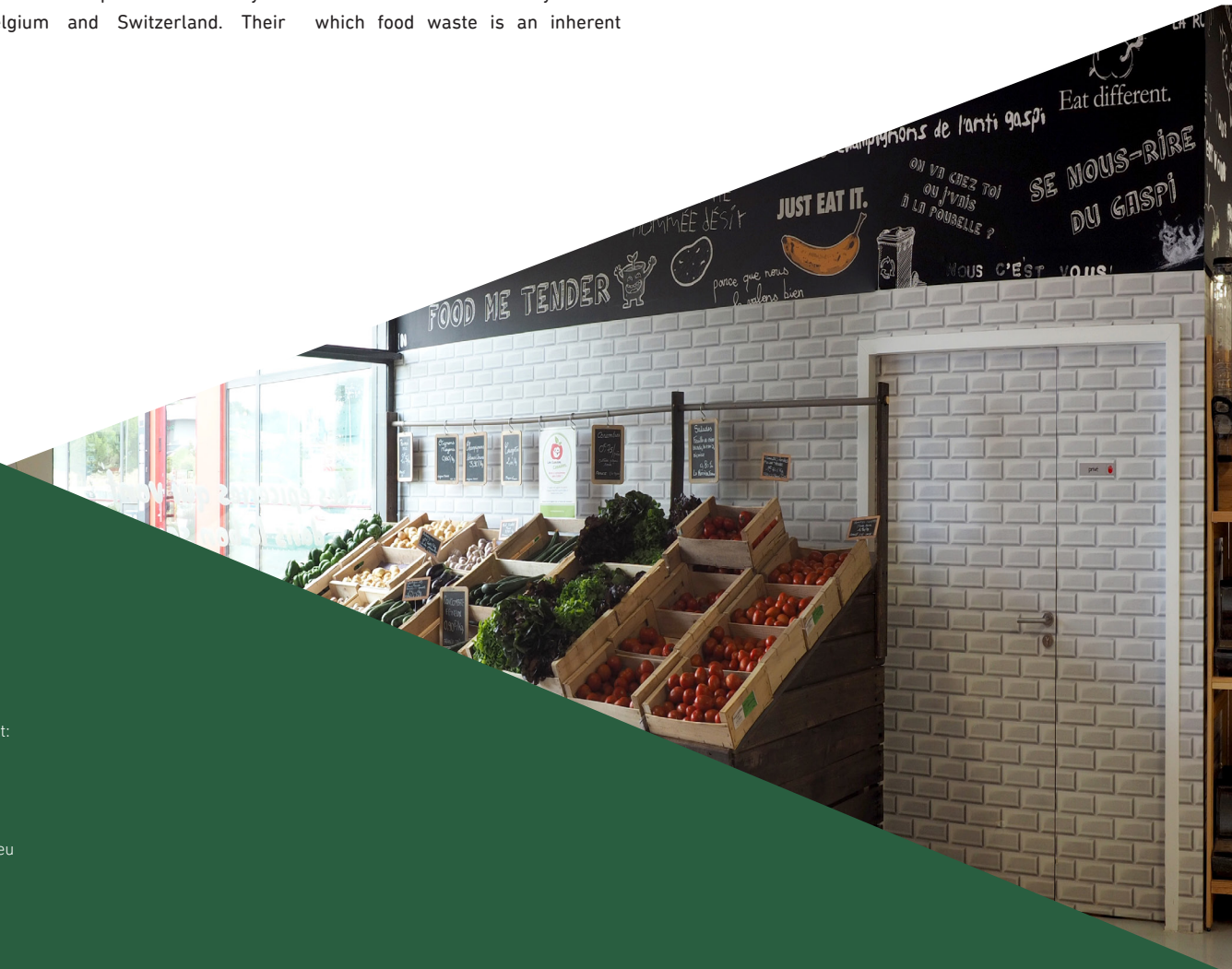
Today, PHENIX aims at working on preventing all types of waste. Even though they already offer a consulting service to companies willing to make a transition to circular economy, they are determined to go even further and work more in fields such as clothing.

PHENIX is now well-established in France and has big plans for the future. They wish to strengthen their network in Spain and Portugal as well as expand their activity to Belgium and Switzerland. Their

collaboration with cities of all sizes has already started to help schools, canteens and other public institutions in their transition.

In spite of the lack of incentives, this quick growth shows a strong will of individuals and institutions to be part of the fight against food waste at every step of the food chain. PHENIX is a solution that takes care of the food that is wasted or about to be wasted and hence allows for optimising the current system. However, addressing the upstream issue of a broken food system of which food waste is an inherent

part, will require the adoption of bold systemic policies to make all the stakeholders responsible for their waste.



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Zero Waste Europe is the European network of communities, local leaders, businesses, experts, and change agents working towards the elimination of waste in our society.

We empower communities to redesign their relationship with resources, and to adopt smarter lifestyles and sustainable consumption patterns in line with a circular economy.

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