

The Catalan law on food loss and waste prevention

Food Waste Prevention Legislation

[LLEI 3/2020, de l'11 de març, de prevenció de les pèrdues i el malbaratament alimentaris.](#)

In March 2020, The government of Catalonia adopted a pioneering law aiming to reduce food waste and loss. Unlike many pieces of legislation, the Catalan law focuses on all steps of the food supply chain and seeks to promote food waste prevention, rather than encouraging food donation. This is carried out through various obligations for stakeholders across the supply chain on the adoption of specific measures, thus including the primary sector.

CATALONIA

Level: Regional (government of Catalonia)

Population: 7.5 million inhabitants

Key figures: At the food services and households level, it is estimated that 262,000 kilograms (kg) of food are wasted, amounting to 7% of the food purchased

FOOD WASTE IN CATALONIA

According to data from 2012 focusing on food services and households, it is estimated that 7% of the food purchased in Catalonia is wasted. This would amount to 35 kg of food waste per inhabitant per year, with 58% happening at the household level. This would be equivalent to a yearly loss of 841 million EUR per year, or 112 EUR per inhabitant.

THE LAW'S OBJECTIVES

The law has the overall objective to “*raise awareness of the problem of food wastage and provide some tools to enable its prevention [...] as well as to promote measures that provide incentives for wastage reduction*”. To do so, it covers the entire food supply chain - from primary production to households - by setting food waste prevention obligations for all stakeholders and not only redistribution. Among the obligations, there are provisions on data measurement and preparation of reduction plans. The legislation also states citizens' rights - for instance, asking for a doggy bag - and regulates gleaning practices.

MAIN MEASURES

Article	Measures
Article 5: obligations of food chain companies, social entities and other non-profit organisations that are dedicated to food distribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory food loss and wastage prevention plans, measuring and reporting on the reduced quantity and on products intended for free distribution and animal feed. • Training and involvement of workers on food waste reduction. • Promotion of product sales near their “best before” or expiry date. • Promotion of sales of imperfect or flawed products. • Promotion of bulk selling and sales of seasonal, local, and sustainable products.
Article 6: additional obligations for restaurant, hotel and catering companies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entities must inform, and make it easy and free for, consumers to take away their food. • Provision of take-away food in recyclable, compostable, or reusable containers.
Article 7: obligations for public authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion of food waste prevention clauses in food-related public contracts and agreements. • Creation of an information system for the collection and analysis of reported data. • Provision of financial resources for food waste prevention projects, creating jobs for underprivileged groups.
Article 10: Consumer’s right	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumers must be able to get information from public authorities and companies on their waste prevention plans. • Consumers must be able to take away their food at no extra cost.
Article 14: offences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infringement of both data reporting and the application of the waste hierarchy is classified as a serious offence.
Final provision 4: gleaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government obligation to regulate gleaning as a non-profit activity, reducing food loss.

LINK TO THE EU LEGISLATION

[Directive 2008/98/EC on waste \(Waste Framework Directive\)](#)

[Regulation 178/2002/EC on food \(General Food Law\)](#)



Focus on waste prevention across the whole supply chain



Set obligations and rights for food stakeholders



Regulation of gleaning practices

For more good practices, check the [Zero Waste Europe website](#) or the [European Environmental Bureau's brief on the economic incentives to reduce waste](#).

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Zero Waste Europe is the European network of communities, local leaders, experts, and change agents working towards the elimination of waste in our society. We advocate for sustainable systems and the redesign of our relationship with resources, to accelerate a just transition towards zero waste for the benefit of people and the planet.



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