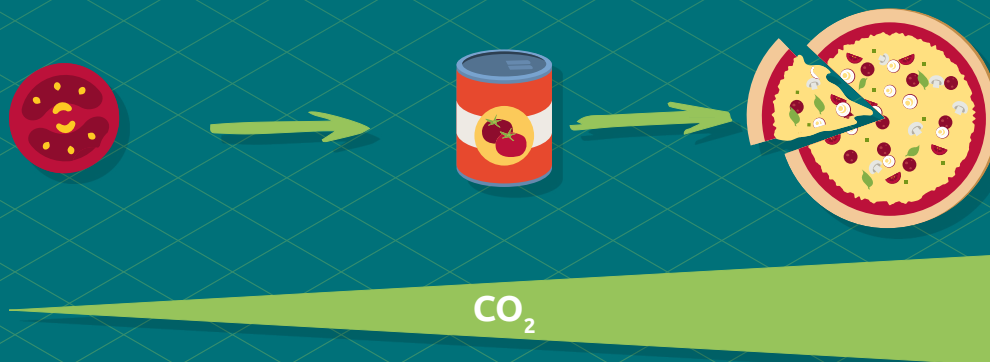


From Farm to Trash: The Costly Consequences of Food Waste

Food loss and waste are major issues in our society. Overall, one-third of all the food that is produced is lost or wasted. Food loss happens during the production, post-harvest and processing. Food waste is food that is thrown away by the consumer. In the EU context, every year, 88 million tonnes of food waste are generated approximately. That is equivalent to 174 kg of food waste per person.



This issue not only has economic implications but also environmental consequences. The production of food generates greenhouse gas emissions and when food is lost or wasted, all the CO₂ generated during production adds to our footprint without purpose. Food loss and waste occur at every stage of the food supply chain, but it is more carbon-intensive the further along the supply chain food loss occurs. For instance, food waste that takes place during transportation and distribution requires significant energy inputs, thus contributing to greenhouse gas emissions.



But also after its disposal, wasted food has harmful effects on the planet. For example, organic waste rotting in landfills emits methane, a greenhouse gas that is 84 times more potent than CO₂ over a 20-year period.