













Procedure file

Basic information		
INI - Own-initiative procedure	2016/2223(INI)	Procedure completed
Initiative on resource efficiency: reducing food waste, improving food safety		
Subject 3.10.10 Foodstuffs, foodstuffs legislation 4.60.04.04 Food safety		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	 Environment, Public Health and Food Safety	 BORZAN Biljana	30/06/2016
		Shadow rapporteur	
		 DELAHAYE Angélique	
		 DEMESMAEKER Mark	
		 MÜLLER Ulrike	
		 ŠKRLEC Davor	
		 PEDICINI Piernicola	
		 JALKH Jean-François	
		Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion
	 Agriculture and Rural Development	 NICHOLSON James	13/07/2016
European Commission	Commission DG Health and Food Safety	Commissioner ANDRIUKAITIS Vytenis Povilas	

Key events			
15/09/2016	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
11/04/2017	Vote in committee		
28/04/2017	Committee report tabled for plenary	A8-0175/2017	Summary

15/05/2017	Debate in Parliament		
16/05/2017	Results of vote in Parliament		
16/05/2017	Decision by Parliament	T8-0207/2017	Summary
16/05/2017	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2016/2223(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 54
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 159
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	ENVI/8/06870

Documentation gateway

Committee draft report		PE595.612	13/12/2016	EP	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE599.592	08/02/2017	EP	
Committee opinion	AGRI	PE595.767	27/03/2017	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A8-0175/2017	28/04/2017	EP	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T8-0207/2017	16/05/2017	EP	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary		SP(2017)511	26/09/2017	EC	

Initiative on resource efficiency: reducing food waste, improving food safety

The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety adopted the own-initiative report by Biljana BORZAN (S&D, HR) on the initiative on resource efficiency: reducing food waste and improving food safety.

Members stressed the urgent need to reduce the amount of food waste, and to improve resource efficiency in the EU at every step of the food chain given that in highly industrialised countries food is wasted predominantly at the sales and consumption stages, while in developing countries food begins to be wasted at the manufacturing and processing stages.

Members called on the Commission to:

- identify EU legislation that might hamper the effective combating of food waste and analyse how it might be adapted to meet the food waste prevention objective;
- evaluate the potential impact of new relevant legislative proposals on food waste;
- examine, by 31 December 2020, the possibility of setting up binding EU-wide food waste reduction targets to be met by 2025 and 2030 on the basis of measurements calculated in accordance with a common methodology;
- draw a clear distinction in its future policies between food wastage and food loss, which is unavoidable at primary production level owing to force majeure events such as storms;
- support a legally binding definition of food waste and to adopt, by 31 December 2017, a common methodology, including minimum quality requirements, for the uniform measurement of food waste levels. A common EU definition and methodology for measuring food loss, applicable to the entire supply chain, would facilitate Member States and stakeholders efforts in calculating and reducing food waste;
- update the list of foods currently exempt from best before labelling in order to prevent food waste.

They called on the Commission and the Member States to:

- put existing financial support for combating food waste on a permanent footing;
- engage in awareness-raising and communication campaigns on how to prevent food waste;
- use the following definition of food waste: food intended for human consumption, either in edible or inedible status, removed from the

production or supply chain to be discarded, including at primary production, processing, manufacturing, transportation, storage, retail and consumer levels, with the exception of primary production losses;

- provide economic incentives to support the collection of unused food, which can either be redistributed to charities or re-used for another secondary purpose which prevents food waste, such as turning unused food into a valuable resource, by using it in the production of feed for livestock and domestic animals;
- consider variable pricing linked to expiry dates, as a tool for reducing the quantity of edible food products which become waste (i.e. by introducing discounts in proportion to the time remaining before product expiry).

Members highlighted the initiatives contained in the Circular Economy Action Plan covering measures for establishing a financial support platform to attract investment and innovations aimed at reducing losses, as well as the guidelines addressed to the Member States for converting some food losses or agricultural by-products into energy.

They stressed that:

- energy needs should be met by using waste and by-products that are not useful in any other process higher up the waste hierarchy;
- successfully combating food waste also requires strong recycling levels in the revised Waste Framework Directive and the integration of the cascading principle for biomass in EU energy policy;
- food waste reduction measures must not compromise food safety, environmental standards or animal protection standards, notably animal health and welfare.

Members called on the Member States to:

- take measures to reduce food losses along the whole supply chain, including in primary production, transportation and storage;
- take the measures required to achieve an EU food waste reduction target of 30% by 2025 and 50% by 2030 compared to the 2014 baseline;
- adopt specific food waste prevention measures within their waste prevention programmes and in particular to establish voluntary agreements and create economic and fiscal incentives (e.g. changing the VAT rules) for donating food and other means of limiting food waste;
- encourage home composting and the separating out of bio-waste at source, and ensure that this waste is subject to bio-recycling;
- use the European Agriculture Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) to reduce food waste in primary production and the processing sector.

Lastly, Members welcomed the creation of the EU Platform on Food Losses and Food Waste and called on it to support the development of a variety of consumer information channels as well as consumer information and foodstuff education programmes.

Initiative on resource efficiency: reducing food waste, improving food safety

The European Parliament adopted by 623 votes to 33, with 20 abstentions, a resolution on the initiative on resource efficiency: reducing food waste and improving food safety.

Members recalled that the FAO estimates that each year approximately 1.3 billion tonnes of food is lost or wasted. Food wastage has high social, economic and environmental costs, as well as ethical consequences.

According to the World Food Programme (WFP), 795 million people in the world do not have enough food to lead a healthy and active life.

In this regard, Parliament stressed the urgent need to reduce the amount of food waste, and to improve resource efficiency in the EU at every step of the food chain. It called on the Member States to take the measures required to achieve a Union food waste reduction target of 30 % by 2025 and 50 % by 2030 compared to the 2014 baseline.

Members called on the Commission to:

- identify EU legislation that might hamper the effective combating of food waste and assess the potential impact of new legislative proposals on food waste;
- examine, by 31 December 2020, the possibility of setting up binding EU-wide food waste reduction targets to be met by 2025 and 2030 on the basis of measurements calculated in accordance with a common methodology;
- support a legally binding definition of food waste and to adopt, by 31 December 2017, a common methodology, including minimum quality requirements, for the uniform measurement of food waste levels;
- draw up a report by 31 December 2018 to assess the need for cross-cutting regulatory measures in the sustainable consumption and production sector;
- update the list of foods currently exempt from best before labelling in order to prevent food waste;
- propose a change in the VAT Directive that would explicitly authorise tax exemptions on food donations.

Members suggested:

- putting existing financial support for combating food waste on a permanent footing;
- engaging in awareness-raising and communication campaigns on how to prevent food waste;
- providing economic incentives to support the collection of unused food, which can either be redistributed to charities or re-used for another secondary purpose which prevents food waste;
- improving the understanding, especially by consumers, of use by and best before dates, and of the usability of foodstuffs after the best before date;
- considering variable pricing linked to expiry dates, as a tool for reducing the quantity of edible food products which become waste (i.e. by introducing discounts in proportion to the time remaining before product expiry).

Parliament highlighted the initiatives contained in the Circular Economy Action Plan covering measures for establishing a financial support platform to attract investment and innovations aimed at reducing losses, as well as the guidelines addressed to the Member States for converting some food losses or agricultural by-products into energy.

It stressed that:

- energy needs should be met by using waste and by-products that are not useful in any other process higher up the waste hierarchy;
- successfully combating food waste also requires strong recycling levels in the revised Waste Framework Directive and the integration of the cascading principle for biomass in EU energy policy;
- food waste reduction measures must not compromise food safety, environmental standards or animal protection standards, notably animal health and welfare.

Parliament also called on the Member States to:

- take measures to reduce food losses along the whole supply chain, including in primary production, transportation and storage;
- adopt specific food waste prevention measures within their waste prevention programmes;
- encourage home composting and the separating out of bio-waste at source, and ensure that this waste is subject to bio-recycling;
- use the European Agriculture Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) to reduce food waste in primary production and the processing sector.

Lastly, the use of Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD) should be promoted to facilitate food donations by financing the costs of collection, transport, storage and distribution.