



Report on Responsible Consumer Choices

“Good Taste Starts in Poland. I Don’t Waste, I Choose Responsibly”

ANALYSIS AND GOOD PRACTICES



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INTRODUCTION

Responsible consumer attitudes. The nationwide campaign "Good Taste Starts in Poland. I Don't Waste, I Choose Responsibly"

According to the PROM project's estimate, published in 2020, food loss and waste in Poland amounted to approximately 4.84 million tonnes a year, around 60% of which was attributable to households. On average, households threw away 3.9 kg of food per week. This means that a large part of the problem is linked to our daily decisions: how much we buy, how we store food and whether we can use it before it ends up in the bin.

Responsible consumption begins before we start wondering what to do with unused food. The product's origin, how we plan our shopping, the information on its label and our ability to use that information to make an informed choice all matter. Choosing Polish and local food can support domestic producers and farmers, while a shorter supply chain can help maintain freshness and reduce losses at subsequent stages.

Our representative survey conducted as part of the campaign shows that the problem is not simply a lack of knowledge. 57% of respondents say they know how to reduce food waste, yet almost half of Poles throw away meal leftovers at least once a month.

The nationwide social and educational campaign "Good Taste Starts in Poland. I Don't Waste, I Choose Responsibly" addresses these challenges. Its aim is to encourage responsible consumer behaviour - from reducing food waste, choosing local and regional products and reading labels, to responsible, well-considered shopping and packaging management.

INTRODUCTION

Responsible consumer attitudes. The nationwide campaign "Good Taste Starts in Poland. I Don't Waste, I Choose Responsibly"

Education is an important part of the campaign, helping translate knowledge into specific behaviours and build good habits from an early age. Another important area is public awareness activities in the media and on social media, aimed at raising Polish consumers' awareness of food waste, product origins and the importance of everyday purchasing decisions.

The campaign brought together communication activities, consumer and analytical research, education and dialogue among representatives of academia, business, public administration and civil society organisations. This made it possible to examine the role of both consumers themselves and their wider environment - retailers, producers, public institutions and education - in creating conditions that support more informed choices among Poles.

This report summarises the key conclusions developed during the campaign. It combines research findings with expert knowledge and partners' experience. It presents the scale and causes of food waste and solutions that can help reduce it, as well as the role of local food, education, retail and the circular economy. Responsible consumer choices do not end at the shop shelf.



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Chapter I

Reducing Food Waste and Encouraging Responsible Consumer Behaviour



1.1. How much food do we waste, and why does it matter?

Food waste is a large-scale phenomenon affecting the entire food chain, from production to households. Every unused product also represents a loss of the resources used to produce, transport and store it. Assessing the scale of this phenomenon helps us better understand its importance and identify areas where action is needed to reduce losses.

The scale of the phenomenon in the European Union and Poland

Publications provide different estimates of the scale of food loss and waste, depending on the definition, research scope and methodology adopted. When comparing data from different sources and periods, it is therefore important to consider exactly what was measured.

According to the latest harmonised Eurostat data, just over 58 million tonnes of food waste were generated in the European Union in 2023, equivalent to approximately 130 kg per person. Households accounted for the largest share: 53% of the total, or around 31 million tonnes. Processing and manufacturing accounted for 19%, food services for 11%, primary production for 10%, and retail and distribution for 8%.¹

These data are reported by Member States according to a common methodology set out in EU legislation. They cover food waste generated at all stages of the supply chain, including both edible and inedible parts removed from the food chain and sent for waste treatment.¹

In Poland, 4,651,137 tonnes of food waste were reported in 2023. The largest share came from households: 2,561,260 tonnes, or around 55% of the total. Retail and distribution accounted for approximately 10.3%, food services for approximately 6.3%, and the remainder came from primary production and processing.¹

The more recent data therefore confirm that households remain the largest source of food waste, although their share is lower than indicated by earlier Polish studies.

What did the PROM project show?

An important reference point for assessing the scale of food waste in Poland remains the PROM* project, "Development of a Food Waste Monitoring System and an Effective Programme to Rationalise Losses and Reduce Food Waste". Research conducted under the project covered the individual stages of the food chain. The compilation was published as an average for 2017-2018; estimates for individual stages also drew on other available data, including data from 2019.

According to this research, total food loss and waste in Poland was estimated at 4,840,946 tonnes a year. Households accounted for the largest share: 2,912,776 tonnes, or 60.17% of the estimated total.³

Stage of the food chain	Quantity [thousand tonnes/year]	Percentage share [%]
Households	2 912,776	60.17%
Food processing	753,630	15.57%
Primary production (agriculture)	749,480	15.48%
Retail	336,986	6.96%
Food services	56,554	1.17%
Transport and storage	31,520	0.65%
TOTAL	4 840,946	100%

Source: research by IOŚ-PIB and SGGW conducted under the PROM project. The data represent the average for 2017-2018.³

PROM and Eurostat results should not be treated as directly comparable measurements, as the studies differ in scope and methodology. PROM estimated “loss and waste” within its research scope, while reporting to the European Commission measures “food waste” across five stages. Their shared conclusion, however, is that households play the dominant role in the breakdown of food waste and wastage in Poland.

The weekly perspective used in the PROM project also clearly illustrates the scale of the problem in households. On average, a Polish household threw away 3.9 kg of food per week, including both edible and inedible parts.³

WHY DOES FOOD WASTE MATTER?

From an environmental perspective

Food that ultimately goes unused has already required land, water, energy, raw materials and transport. Producing something that is not eaten therefore means not only an additional waste stream, but also inefficient resource use and emissions associated with the entire production and distribution process. Reducing waste is consequently one element of building a more sustainable food system.²

From an economic perspective

Losses affect both businesses operating in the agri-food chain and consumers themselves. Producing, transporting, storing and subsequently managing food that is not used as intended generates costs. In households, discarded food represents a direct loss of part of the money spent on shopping. The PROM Strategy points out that waste reduces the economic efficiency of the agri-food sector while diminishing households' real incomes.²

The scale of this loss takes on added significance when considered against food's share of household expenditure. In the expenditure structure used by Statistics Poland (GUS) to calculate the consumer price index in 2025, food accounted for 23.6% of total expenditure, while in 2021 and 2024 it exceeded 25%. Food prices also rose by 4.5% in 2025, compared with a 3.6% increase in overall consumer goods and services prices. In this context, unused and discarded food also means losing part of the money previously spent on purchasing it.⁴

From a social perspective

Food waste is also linked to food availability and food security. Reducing losses means making better use of what has already been produced and creates more opportunities to pass on food that remains fit for consumption instead of directing it into the waste stream. More broadly, data on hunger and food insecurity illustrate the importance of the issue. According to FAO data cited by Statistics Poland, in 2025 between 608 and 696 million people worldwide experienced hunger, while around 2.1 billion people faced moderate or severe food insecurity.⁴ Although Poland is among the countries with a high level of food security, these figures show that food remains a resource of fundamental social importance. Its responsible use therefore has implications beyond economic and environmental concerns.

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¹ Eurostat, Food waste and food waste prevention - estimates, 2023 data, env_wasfw database, published 16.10.2025.

² Krajowy Ośrodek Wsparcia Rolnictwa, Strategia racjonalizacji strat i ograniczania marnotrawstwa żywności, project document, Warsaw, 2021, PROM project.

³ Łaba S. et al., "Próba oszacowania strat i marnotrawstwa żywności w Polsce", Przemysł Spożywczy, 2020, 74(11), DOI: 10.15199/65.2020.11.2.arsaw, 2021, PROM project.

⁴ Statistics Poland, Żywność, unpublished internal material, Departament Rolnictwa i Środowiska GUS, Warsaw, 2026, pp. 1-2, 20.



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At the Food Banks, we race against time every day to save food that remains fit for consumption, donated by retailers, producers and processors, from going to waste. When products are approaching their use-by dates, time is crucial: food must be collected, transported and delivered to people in need while it is still safe to eat. But preventing waste need not concern only large donations and whole pallets of products. If planning and proper storage fail at home and we are left with food we will not use, we can still share it. We can give it to family, neighbours or friends, or use food-sharing points and community fridges. What matters is that good food should not end up in the bin simply because we cannot eat it in time.

1.2. Where and why do we waste food?

Losses occur throughout food's journey

Food can be lost or wasted at every stage of its journey: from farms through processing, transport and storage, to shops, food services and ultimately consumers' homes. The causes, however, are not the same everywhere. At the earlier stages, production conditions, technology, process organisation and logistics are more significant, while in households a large share of losses is linked to everyday decisions about shopping, storage and meal preparation.

The final stage of this chain proves particularly important. The largest share of losses occurs in households, where food is most often not used in time, spoils or ends up in the bin as surplus from shopping and meals.

Where do losses arise in the food chain?

At the agricultural production stage, some losses result from factors over which producers have limited control, including weather, diseases and pests. Inefficient processes, damage to raw materials, organisational errors and production exceeding actual demand also play a role.³

In processing, causes may include equipment breakdowns and production stoppages, labelling errors, defective packaging, damaged products and problems maintaining the correct temperature. In transport and storage, risks are increased by vehicle breakdowns, packaging damage during transport and handling, unsuitable storage conditions and excessively long storage periods.³

In retail, matching stocks to demand, monitoring dates and maintaining suitable storage conditions are particularly important. Excess stock, especially fresh products and those with short shelf lives, increases the risk that they will not be sold in time.³

The problem takes a different form in food services, where losses may be linked to inaccurate demand estimates and the size of portions prepared and served. In the PROM study, almost 52% of restaurant employees identified ordering too many dishes as one reason for waste, while 41.9% pointed to oversized portions.³

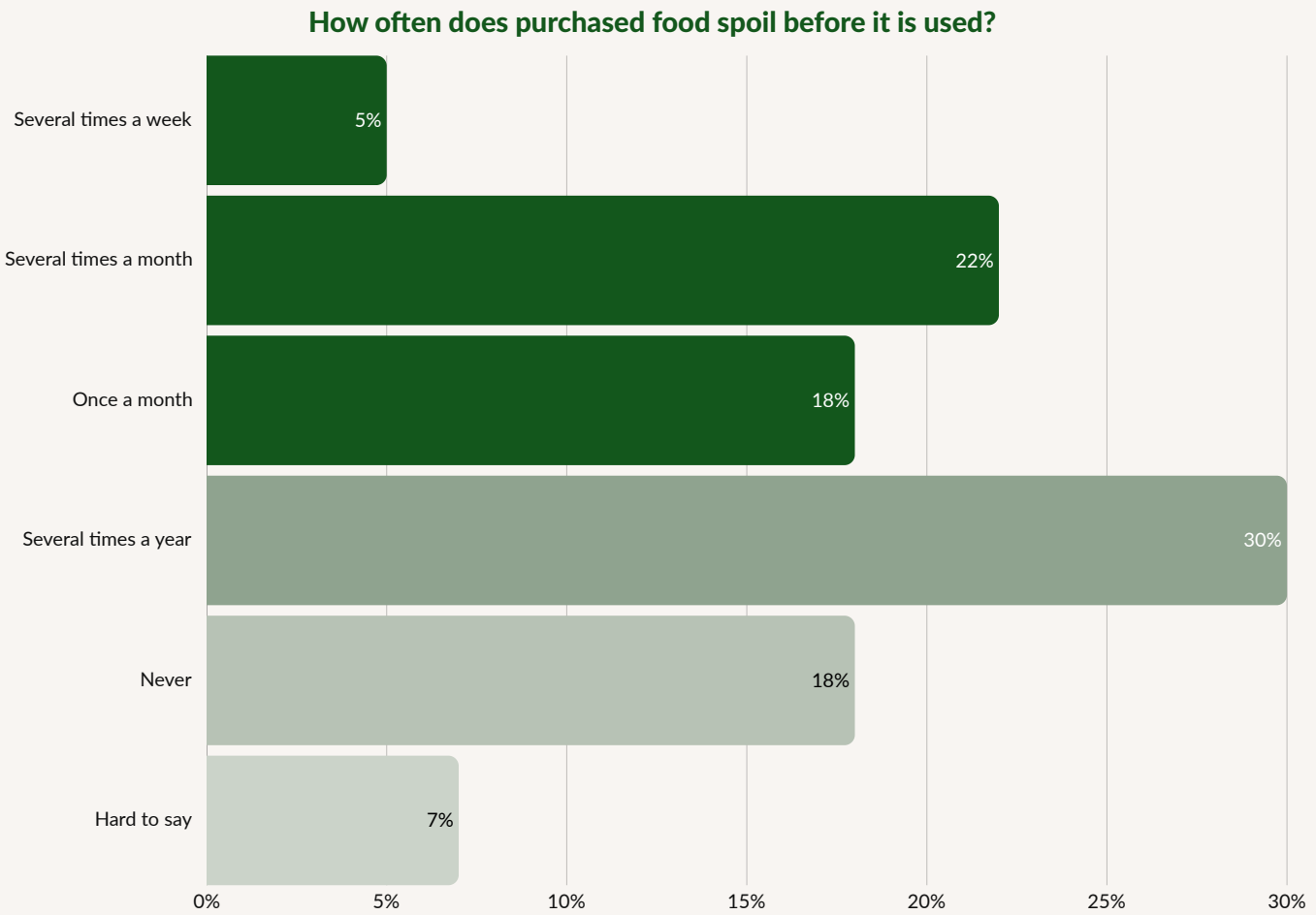
Households have the greatest influence

Households account for as much as 60% of the estimated scale of food waste in Poland.³ It is at this stage that the importance of everyday decisions becomes particularly clear.

In the Norstat Polska survey conducted for the nationwide educational and social campaign "Good Taste Starts in Poland. I Don't Waste, I Choose Responsibly", the most frequently cited reason for throwing food away was spoilage, at 61.7%. Other reasons were expiry of the use-by date, at 27.9%, and situations in which a product had not spoiled but its appearance or smell caused concern, at 23.5%. Buying too much food was cited by 15.7% of respondents, and preparing an oversized portion by 12.5%.⁴

How often does food end up in the bin?

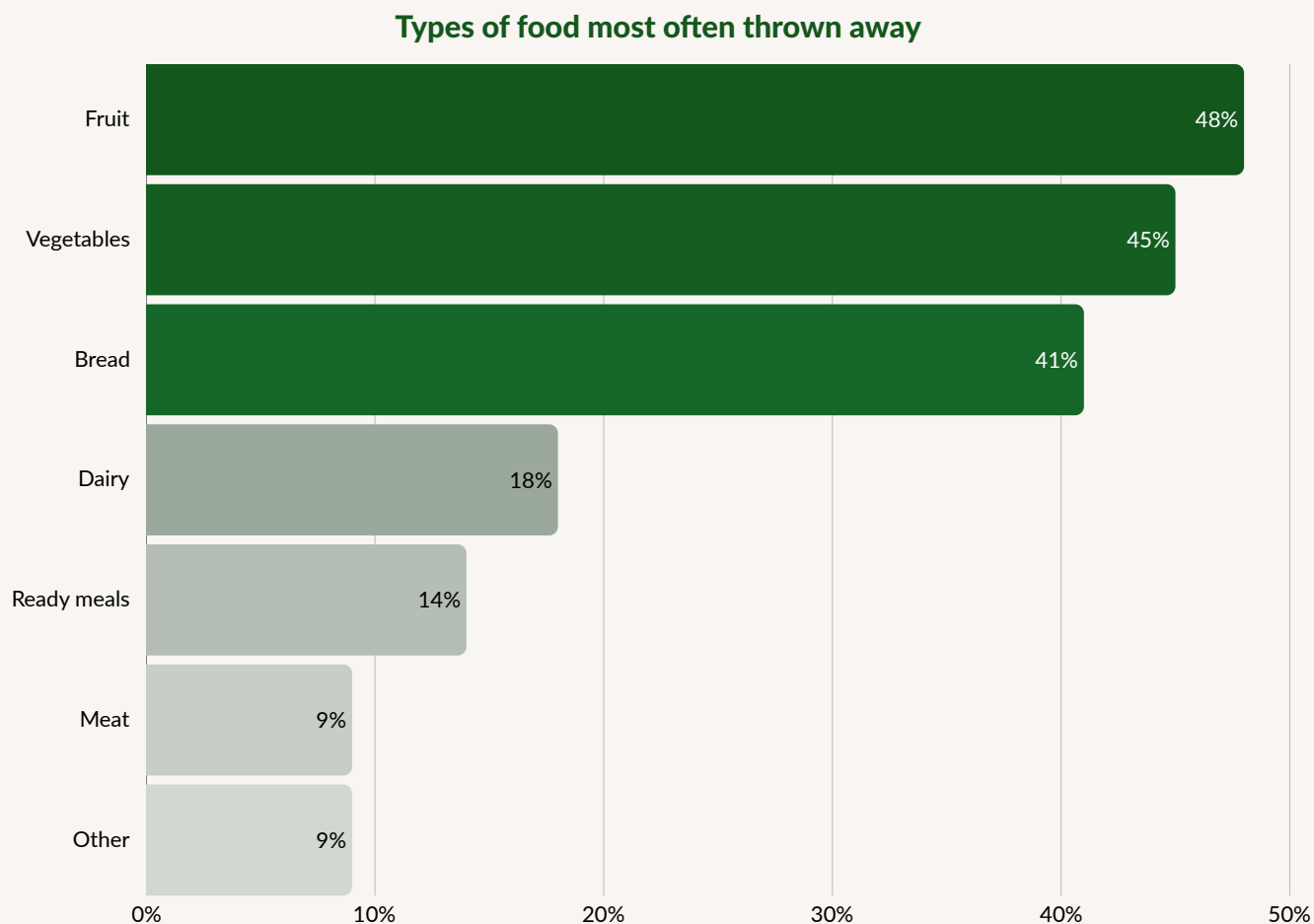
In the campaign survey, 45% of Poles said that food they had bought spoiled before being used at least once a month: for 5%, this happened several times a week; for 22%, several times a month; and for 18%, once a month.⁴



Source: Norstat Polska, survey conducted for the campaign “Good Taste Starts in Poland. I Don't Waste, I Choose Responsibly”, N=1079, weighted results.

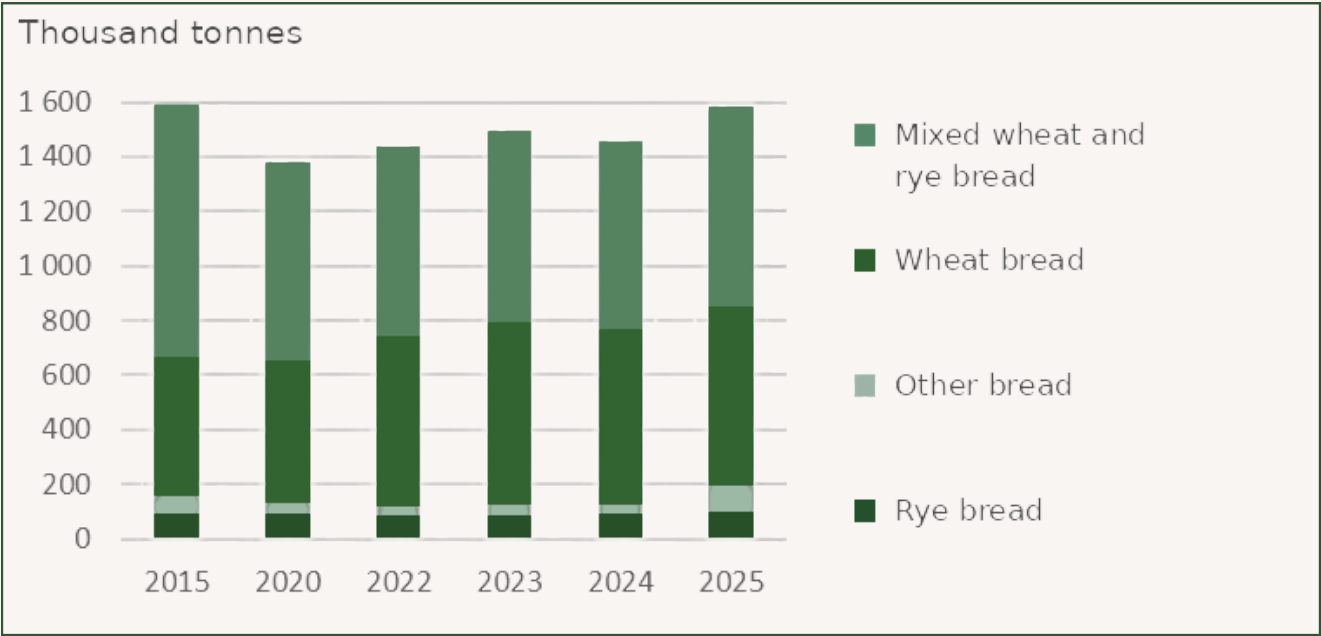
What ends up in the bin most often?

The latest Norstat Polska survey conducted for the campaign confirms that fresh products are particularly at risk of being wasted.



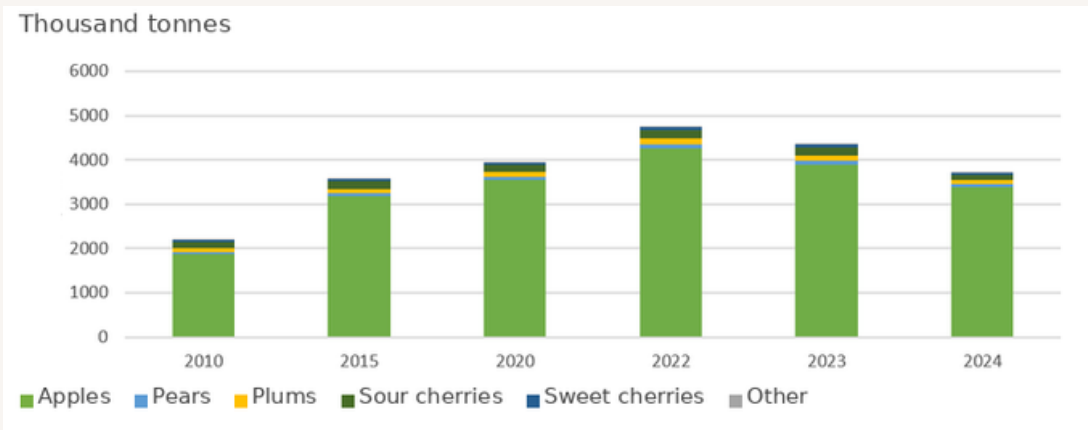
Source: Norstat Polska, survey conducted for the campaign “Good Taste Starts in Poland. I Don't Waste, I Choose Responsibly”, N=1079, weighted results.

Bread deserves particular attention here, also because of the scale of its production. Statistics Poland data show that fresh bread production in Poland exceeded 1.58 million tonnes in 2025.⁵ Comparing this scale with bread's high ranking among products reported as being discarded shows how important this category is in discussions about reducing food waste.



Source: Author's own compilation based on Statistics Poland data.

Fruit also deserves attention. In the Norstat Polska survey, it ranked first among products reported as being discarded, cited by 48% of respondents. It is also an important category of domestic food production. According to Statistics Poland, depending on weather conditions, Poland's annual tree-fruit harvest ranges from 3.5 to 4.8 million tonnes, of which approximately 80% consists of apples.⁵



Source: Author's own compilation based on Statistics Poland data.

References

¹ Łaba S. et al., "Próba oszacowania strat i marnotrawstwa żywności w Polsce", Przemysł Spożywczy, 2020, 74(11).
² Łaba S. (ed.), *Straty i marnotrawstwo żywności w Polsce. Skala i przyczyny problemu*, Instytut Ochrony Środowiska – Państwowy Instytut Badawczy, Warsaw, 2020.
³ Krajowy Ośrodek Wsparcia Rolnictwa, *Strategia racjonalizacji strat i ograniczania marnotrawstwa żywności*, project document, Warsaw, 2021, PROM project.
⁴ Norstat Polska, survey conducted for the campaign "Good Taste Starts in Poland. I Don't Waste, I Choose Responsibly", N=1079, weighted results.
⁵ Statistics Poland, *Żywność*, unpublished internal material, Departament Rolnictwa i Środowiska GUS, Warsaw, 2026, pp. 1–2, 20.

The survey findings show that one of the greatest challenges in reducing food waste is translating awareness of the problem into everyday behaviour. Nearly 70% of respondents believe that reducing food waste in their own homes can have a real impact on the environment and the world around them. At the same time, 44.6% say that food they have bought spoils before use at least once a month, and 45.8% throw away meal leftovers just as frequently.



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What ends up in the bin is particularly significant. Fruit, vegetables and bread are among the most frequently discarded products, and spoilage is the main reason given for throwing food away. This shows the importance of decisions made before food becomes waste: planning shopping according to needs, checking what we already have at home, storing products correctly and using them early enough.

Reducing food waste should be seen as more than simply reducing the amount of waste. Along with unused food, we also lose the resources involved in producing it and delivering it to consumers. From an environmental protection perspective, preventing food waste at source is therefore the most important priority. At the same time, the survey results show considerable potential for change: consumers recognise their ability to make a difference. What is needed now are solutions and education that help turn this declared willingness into simple, repeatable household practices.

1.3. How do Poles buy and manage food?

The amount of food that ultimately ends up in the bin results from a whole sequence of everyday household decisions. Checking stocks, planning the quantities needed, storing products, monitoring dates, reading labels and using what remains after a meal all matter. The literature on food waste emphasises precisely this role of consumer behaviour and household food management.⁵

We do not always stick to the shopping list

In the representative survey conducted for the campaign, 31.3% of respondents said they prepared a shopping list and stuck to it. Another 29% also used a list but often added products that were not originally on it. 22.3% planned their shopping only in their heads, while 8.9% shopped spontaneously, without a prior plan.¹

A shopping list alone therefore does not guarantee that we will bring home exactly as much food as we actually need. Checking the fridge and cupboards beforehand and matching purchases to planned meals are also important. Studies analysed by IOŚ-PIB (the Institute of Environmental Protection - National Research Institute) indicated that knowing what is already stocked at home helps prevent unnecessary purchases, and that shopping planning, list-making and advance meal planning are closely related.²

The problem of excess is also evident in our survey results. 71% of respondents admit that, at least several times a year, they buy more food than they can use, which means some must subsequently be thrown away. For 21%, this happens several times a month or more often.¹ Only 22% say it never happens.¹

After shopping comes storage

How food is managed after purchase has a major effect on how long products remain fresh and whether they are used in time. Household studies indicate that failure to review stocks regularly, unsuitable storage conditions, spoilage and overlooking dates on packaging can all lead to waste.² Matching the amount of food purchased to needs also matters: in the PROM study, 17% of respondents cited oversized packaging as one cause of waste, and 10% cited a lack of ideas for using products they already had.³

The campaign survey shows that 50% of respondents say they store most products according to recommendations and regularly check household stocks. Another 23% try to do so correctly but admit they do not always know the best conditions for particular foods.¹ The remainder more often follow their habits or use whatever space is available in the fridge and cupboards.

Everyday food management is also supported by solutions that help maintain suitable conditions and organise stocks. 42% of respondents use refrigerators with drawers or compartments intended for specific product groups, and 40% use reusable containers. Meanwhile, 18% look for recipes that use products approaching their use-by dates. Digital solutions are used much less frequently: 3% of respondents mentioned meal-planning and shopping-list apps, and the same share mentioned remotely viewing the contents of the fridge.¹

Proper storage is particularly important for perishable products such as meat, fish, dairy and some fruit and vegetables. Appropriate temperatures and regular stock checks help extend the time during which food retains its quality and can be used.⁴

Leftovers do not always become waste

The survey shows that most respondents try to use surplus prepared food. 39% eat it over the following days, 22% freeze it and 15% use it to prepare another dish. Only 5% say they usually throw surplus food away, while 6% use only part of it.¹ Nevertheless, meal leftovers are still discarded regularly: 35% of respondents admit that this happens several times a month or more often.¹

Reducing waste at this stage primarily means using surplus food in the next meal, freezing it, turning it into something else or passing it on. Preparing portions that reflect the household's actual needs can also help. One way to share food that remains fit for consumption is through food-sharing points (jadłodzielnie): publicly accessible places where people can leave products and, in some cases, previously prepared meals or preserves that they cannot use at home. Such solutions extend food's use and show that a surplus need not automatically become waste.

Generational differences are also apparent in food management. Among people aged 18-29, 38% say food spoils before use several times a month or more often, compared with 11% in the 62+ age group. Meanwhile, 37% of the youngest respondents and 60% of the oldest say they store products correctly and check stocks regularly.¹ A similar relationship between age and the reported frequency of waste was also observed in a 2025 study.⁴

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¹ Norstat Polska, survey conducted for the campaign "Good Taste Starts in Poland. I Don't Waste, I Choose Responsibly", N=1079, 2026, weighted results.

² Łaba S. (ed.), *Straty i marnotrawstwo żywności w Polsce. Skala i przyczyny problemu*, Instytut Ochrony Środowiska – Państwowy Instytut Badawczy, Warsaw, 2020.

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The differences between age groups are striking: people over 62 are half as likely to report wasting food as other age groups. Although the youngest respondents have encountered educational materials on reducing food waste much more often (61% of those aged 18-29, compared with 44% in the 62+ group), in practice they rely less often on effective methods such as shopping with a list, checking stocks, freezing leftovers or avoiding spontaneous purchases. Older people report that they almost never throw food away, while this happens to one in six people in their thirties. The difference therefore lies not so much in exposure to knowledge per se as in how effectively it is translated into everyday habits.

1.4.From awareness to action - how can we reduce food waste?

The key challenge is translating relatively high awareness of the problem into everyday habits and practical action. The survey shows varying levels of consumer knowledge about reducing food waste. 24.7% of respondents say they have previously encountered educational materials and consider their knowledge sufficient to reduce food waste at home. Another 16.6% have also encountered such content but consider their knowledge only partial. Meanwhile, 8.9% admit that they remember little of the information received and do not know how to apply it in practice. Together, this means that around half of respondents have encountered educational materials on preventing food waste.¹

At the same time, 31.8% do not recall encountering such materials but nevertheless believe they know how to reduce food waste at home. 5.5% have not encountered educational materials and do not feel sufficiently prepared to reduce losses, while 12.5% cannot clearly assess their knowledge. Overall, therefore, 56.5% believe they have sufficient knowledge in this area, regardless of whether they have previously encountered educational materials.¹

Understanding Date Labels on Food Packaging

Checking expiry dates can prevent food from being discovered only when it is no longer suitable for use. Correctly understanding the information on packaging is also important, however.

“Use by” and “best before” labels convey different information to consumers. The former concerns food safety, while the latter primarily indicates the period during which the product retains its expected quality. Misinterpreting these messages can lead to food being thrown away prematurely.³

Consumers pay particular attention to date labels on food packaging. However, 61.6% of respondents say they are certain they know the difference between the two labels, while another 27.8% think they probably know it but are not entirely certain.¹ Checking dates alone is not enough; consumers also need to understand what they mean.

Distinguishing between “best before” and “use by” labels is very important for reducing food waste. The former indicates that the product's quality may deteriorate after the stated date, while the latter means that, once the date has passed, the product may pose a health risk. Consumers more readily accept the risk of reduced quality than the risk of health consequences, and it is good if they do so consciously. The results indicate a fairly high level of awareness among Polish women and men on this issue, with no significant differences by respondents' age or gender. There is still room, however, to increase our consumer awareness, particularly among 18-29-year-olds.



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Responsibility also applies to packaging

Responsible resource management also includes how packaging is handled after a product has been used. The deposit return system is a good example: a consumer's everyday decision to keep and return packaging becomes part of a wider circulation of materials.

Using the deposit return system supports separate collection of packaging and increases the chances that it will be used again as a raw material. From a consumer's perspective, this is a simple habit, but its significance extends beyond recovering the deposit. It forms part of a more responsible consumption model in which both the use of the product itself and what happens to its packaging afterwards matter.

Knowledge is only the first step

The survey findings indicate clear generational differences in behaviours related to food waste. People over 62 report wasting food much less often than younger groups. At the same time, the youngest respondents are more likely to have encountered educational materials on reducing waste. Younger people nevertheless make less use of some practical ways to reduce losses, such as checking stocks, shopping with a list and freezing leftovers.¹

This does not mean that education is ineffective. Rather, it shows that simply providing information does not guarantee lasting behavioural change. Educational activities should therefore explain not only why food waste is a problem, but also suggest solutions that can be applied in daily life. Findings from research by IOŚ-PIB (the Institute of Environmental Protection - National Research Institute) also indicate the need to adapt such activities to the behaviours and practices of different consumer groups.²

There is considerable potential for change. 69.1% of participants in our survey agree that reducing food waste at home can have a real impact on the environment and the world around them.¹ Environmental arguments are not the only ones that matter. For 90.4% of respondents, saving money is an important reason to reduce waste; for 88.2%, it is respect for food and the work of those involved in producing it; and for 80%, it is concern for the environment and reducing the amount of waste.¹

School as a place for building good habits

Education on preventing food waste is particularly important for children and young people. Many habits related to eating, shopping and managing food develop in childhood, so schools can play an important role in building a responsible approach to food from an early age. The authors of "Good Practices in Preventing Food Waste. A Guide for Primary Schools" ("Dobre praktyki niemarnowania żywności. Przewodnik dla szkół podstawowych.") emphasise that educational activities should continue through successive stages of education and involve both teachers and parents.⁴



**dr Zuzanna Jastrzębska-Krajewska,
campaign initiator and content lead**

Education on preventing food waste is extremely important, but “I know” does not yet mean “I do”. Between knowledge and actual behaviour lies habit, and habits take a long time to build. That is why we need not only to provide information but also to teach specific behaviours that can be applied every day. Teachers have a particularly important role here, because they pass this knowledge on to children and young people. It is from the earliest years that we can build awareness which later translates into everyday decisions about shopping, using food and reducing waste, says Dr Zuzanna Jastrzębska-Krajewska, the campaign's initiator and content lead.

Knowledge of the problem alone is not always enough to change everyday behaviour. Qualitative research among primary-school pupils under the Junior-Edu-Żywnienie programme showed that children know about preventing food waste but need this knowledge to be reinforced through practical activities. It is therefore important to develop skills that pupils can use both at school and later at home.⁴

Such lessons can cover shopping and meal planning, proper food storage, understanding the difference between “use by” and “best before” labels, and using food left over after preparing meals. Methods that engage pupils are particularly important in education: workshops, exercises, demonstrations and other formats that help translate acquired knowledge into specific actions.⁴

Maintaining continuity between school education and a child's everyday experience is also important. Good practices learned during lessons can be reinforced at home, and parental involvement can strengthen teachers' work. The guide's authors indicate that educational programmes can be more effective when they involve different groups: pupils, teachers, parents and carers.⁴

The nationwide social and educational campaign “Good Taste Starts in Poland. I Don't Waste, I Choose Responsibly” has also developed free educational materials tailored to different stages of education: grades 0-3, grades 4-8 and secondary schools. They include lesson plans, worksheets, materials for teachers and scripts for audio plays. The materials were prepared by Zuzanna Jastrzębska-Krajewska, PhD. on behalf of the Edyta Gruszczyk-Kolczyńska Foundation for Supporting Children's Development, which is responsible for the campaign's educational content.

The campaign's educational activities are also complemented by the “Smakuj zdrowo i lokalnie” (“Enjoy Healthy, Local Food”) competition for pupils, organised by the Institute of Human Nutrition Sciences at Warsaw University of Life Sciences (SGGW) under the Junior-Edu-Żywnienie programme. The “Good Taste Starts in Poland. I Don't Waste, I Choose Responsibly” campaign is a partner of the competition, which promotes informed food choices, the use of local and regional products and a responsible approach to food.

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⁴ Czarniecka-Skubina E., Gutkowska K., Hamułka J., *Junior-Edu-Żywnienie. Dobre praktyki niemarnowania żywności. Przewodnik dla szkół podstawowych*, Wydawnictwo SGGW, Warsaw, 2025.



“Smakuj zdrowo i lokalnie” (“Enjoy Healthy, Local Food”) competition



Campaign educational materials

1.5. Local means responsible - the role of local food

Choosing local food can be one element of more informed consumption, but “local” should not be equated solely with a short distance between the place of production and the shop. The European Commission distinguishes local food systems from short supply chains. In the former, production, processing, sale and consumption take place within a relatively small area; in a short supply chain, the key factor is primarily the limited number of intermediaries between producer and consumer.¹

This approach can bring consumers closer to where food is produced, make information about its origin and production methods easier to obtain, and keep a larger share of the product's value in the local economy. An analysis of short supply chains conducted for the European Commission indicates that a closer relationship between producers and consumers can build trust, increase food knowledge and influence purchasing decisions.²

These arguments are also reflected in the survey conducted as part of the “Good Taste Starts in Poland. I Don't Waste, I Choose Responsibly” campaign. For 42.5% of respondents, one of the main reasons for choosing Polish or local food is a desire to support domestic producers and farmers. 37.3% cite better taste, 33.9% greater freshness and 32.5% higher quality. Meanwhile, 24.6% associate choosing such products with a shorter supply chain and a lower environmental impact.³

Shorter Supply Chains and Food Waste

Fewer stages between farm and consumer can mean fewer transport, storage and handling operations. This does not mean, however, that every local product automatically has a smaller environmental footprint or will always be less likely to go to waste. Analyses conducted for the European Commission show that environmental outcomes also depend on production methods, transport organisation and storage. Local origin alone is therefore not a sufficient criterion for assessing a product's environmental impact.²

Greater potential arises when a short chain is combined with seasonality and local production. The Commission notes that this combination can reduce the need for prolonged food storage.¹ This may matter for fresh products, especially fruit and vegetables, whose quality changes relatively quickly over time.

The relationship between a short supply chain and reduced waste nevertheless requires careful interpretation. The European Commission indicates that available data do not yet allow the scale of this effect to be determined conclusively. One observed mechanism, however, may be the greater value attached to food bought directly from a farmer or at a market, which could encourage more careful management of the product.¹

Consumers' views are similarly mixed. In the campaign survey, 47.8% believe that buying local products can help reduce food waste. At the same time, 21.9% see no connection between the two, while 11.2% cannot assess it.³ This shows that the relationship between local origin and preventing waste is not obvious to consumers and requires an explanation of specific mechanisms, rather than simply relying on the slogan “local means better”.

Clear Information Supports Responsible Choices

To choose food consciously, consumers need to be able to recognise its origin and correctly understand the information on its packaging. The campaign survey shows that 44.9% always or often check whether a food product comes from Poland before buying it, while another 28% do so sometimes. Meanwhile, 17% identify not knowing how to verify a product's actual origin as one barrier to buying Polish or local products more often. 23.4% believe such products are not labelled clearly enough.³

This is not a new problem. The European Commission has pointed out that some people interested in local food have difficulty identifying it, and consumers do not always interpret available labels correctly.¹

In Poland, one tool that helps identify domestic origin is the “Produkt polski” (“Polish Product”) label. It may be used for products that meet legally defined criteria. For unprocessed products, this means, among other things, that production, cultivation or rearing took place in Poland. Processed foods must be based on domestic raw materials, although in specified circumstances a share of imported ingredients not produced in Poland is permitted.⁴

Origin alone, however, does not cover all the information worth checking. A label also allows consumers to assess ingredients, the use-by date, storage conditions and the details of the operator responsible for food information. For fresh fruit and vegetables, labelling rules require, among other things, the country of origin to be stated.⁵ Reading labels carefully therefore helps not only to choose a product that matches one's preferences, but also to store it correctly and use it in good time.

Local, regional and traditional do not mean the same thing

Our survey results also show that “local product” does not have a single meaning for consumers. The largest group, 31.6%, understands it as a product from their own region or voivodeship; 22.1% associate local origin with their town or immediate surroundings; and 21.1% with a traditional product characteristic of a particular region. Only 9.1% consider every product made in Poland to be local.

It is therefore useful to distinguish between “Polish”, “local”, “regional” and “traditional”. The EU system includes Protected Designation of Origin (PDO), Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) and Traditional Speciality Guaranteed (TSG) labels. They inform consumers about a product's connection to a particular place, its special characteristics or its traditional production method. The right to use the protected name and corresponding label belongs to producers who meet the requirements set out in the product specification.⁶

A separate tool is the List of Traditional Products maintained by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. It includes products whose characteristics or quality are associated with traditional production methods and the heritage of a particular region. Inclusion on the list does not, however, provide the same name protection as the EU's PDO, PGI and TSG schemes.⁷

Every Product Represents Someone's Work

Choosing local and Polish food also has economic and social dimensions. Shorter chains reduce the number of intermediaries, allowing producers to retain a larger share of a product's value. The European Commission also indicates that local food systems can strengthen regional economies, support employment and build more direct relationships between consumers and farmers.²

Behind the food on our tables lies an extensive production system and the work of many people. Poland has more than 1.2 million farms, and the scale of domestic production shows how many resources are involved before a product even reaches the shop. In 2023, approximately 4.6 million tonnes of vegetables and 4.9 million tonnes of fruit were harvested, with apples accounting for around 80% of the domestic tree-fruit harvest. Animal production is equally substantial: in 2025, fresh or chilled pork production exceeded 2 million tonnes, while beef and veal production amounted to more than 650 thousand tonnes.⁹

From this perspective, consumers' everyday decisions take on broader significance. A discarded slice of bread, vegetable, piece of fruit or portion of meat is not only an unused product, but also the wasted outcome of producers' work and the resources used at successive stages of production, processing, transport and sale. Responsible food management therefore also means respecting the work of the people behind its production and consciously using products already in our homes.

A shorter journey from farm to consumer can further encourage more informed and responsible choices. In Poland, short supply chains include direct sales, direct supplies and agricultural retail trade, through which food can reach consumers or local outlets directly from the farm.⁸

Behind a loaf of bread, a litre of milk or a kilogram of vegetables lies an entire process: from cultivation or rearing, through harvesting and preparing raw materials, to processing and sale. Better understanding this journey can help us see not only the finished product's price, but also the work and resources needed to produce it. In studies of short supply chains, close contact with producers was associated with greater consumer knowledge about food and a better understanding of how it is produced.¹

Choosing domestic or local food should not be presented as a simple obligation on consumers. It is better seen as one element of a responsible choice, alongside product quality, price, seasonality, production methods and whether the food purchased can realistically be used. What matters most is not the product's place of origin alone, but decisions that combine awareness of origin, respect for producers' work and shopping plans that ensure food is used rather than wasted.

Consumers still often fail to distinguish local products from regional or organic ones, so we need education that explains what these terms actually mean. A local product is made within a small area, from local raw materials and by local producers, and its defining feature is also a short journey to the consumer. A regional product relates to a wider area and has additional value because it promotes the region and its traditions and can support culinary tourism. Both local and regional origin can play a role in reducing food waste, but consumers do not always see this connection. We therefore need to explain not only how the different types of products differ, but also the consequences of our everyday choices. For local products, direct sales and direct contact between producer and consumer are particularly important.



**Izabella Byszewska,
President of the
Management Board, Polish
Chamber of Regional and
Local Products**

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1.6. The Deposit-Refund System: How Consumers Contribute to a Circular Economy

Responsible consumption also includes what happens to packaging after the product has been used. In a deposit-refund system, consumers help keep materials in circulation by storing and returning empty packaging correctly.

Poland's deposit-refund system has been operating since 1 October 2025. It covers plastic PET bottles of up to 3 litres, metal cans of up to 1 litre and reusable glass bottles of up to 1.5 litres. The deposit is 50 groszy for PET bottles and cans, and PLN 1 for reusable glass bottles. Packaging covered by the system bears a special symbol indicating the deposit amount.¹

The mechanism is simple: consumers pay a deposit when buying a beverage and get it back when they return the empty packaging to a collection point. No receipt is required, but the system marking must remain intact and the packaging must not be crushed. Shops with a sales area of more than 200 m² that sell beverages in packaging covered by the system must operate collection points. Smaller outlets can participate voluntarily, except those selling beverages in reusable glass bottles, which must accept returns of these bottles.¹

From waste to raw material

The deposit refund system is intended to increase separate packaging collection rates and improve the quality of materials sent for recycling. A separate collection stream makes it easier to maintain the right material quality and use it again. Reusable packaging, meanwhile, can be refilled and put back into circulation. The system thus supports a circular economy model in which materials remain in use for as long as possible.¹

Data to date show a rapidly growing scale of system use. According to the Ministry of Climate and Environment, 3.2 billion deposit-bearing bottles and cans were returned between October 2025 and July 2026. More than 60 thousand return points were operating across Poland, including approximately 17.5 thousand equipped with reverse vending machines.³

Convenience can determine the system's success

The campaign survey indicates that accessibility of return points is particularly important to consumers. 48.6% would prefer to return packaging somewhere close to home, regardless of the type of location. 38.3% chose a machine in a large shop or discount store, and 25.2% a machine in a smaller, local shop. Returning packaging directly at the checkout was chosen by 11.4%, while a dedicated collection point outside a shop was chosen by 14.6%. Only 6.6% said they did not intend to use the deposit refund system.²

Operational data also confirm the importance of convenience. As many as 88% of all returns are made through reverse vending machines. At the same time, the system is gradually expanding beyond traditional retail outlets: by August 2026, almost 600 collection points not directly connected to shops were already operating.³

Expanding the network of return points makes it easier to incorporate packaging returns into everyday consumer behaviour. The simpler and more accessible the return process, the more easily it can become a regular part of the shopping routine.

The deposit refund system also shows that a more responsible consumption model requires cooperation among many parties. The producer placing beverages on the market is responsible for correct packaging labelling and participation in the system; retailers provide purchasing and return facilities; the operator organises the flow of packaging, data and deposits; and consumers complete the cycle by returning packaging.¹

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Chapter II

How Businesses Reduce Food Waste and Support Informed Choices



2.1. Beyond Compliance: The Role of Business in Promoting Responsible Consumption

Reducing food waste is not solely consumers' responsibility. How many products are ultimately used as intended depends on decisions made at every stage of the chain: from production and transport, through demand planning and stock management, to sales methods, surplus management and customer communication. Business engagement is therefore an important part of change. Businesses can not only respond to losses but, above all, prevent them. For companies, this means going beyond compliance and implementing solutions that can become a permanent part of everyday operations.

Retail has a particular role because it can support consumers directly where purchasing decisions are made. As the Polish Organisation of Commerce and Distribution (POHiD) emphasises, clear communication, education and conditions that make informed choices simpler and easier for customers to understand are especially important. This includes drawing attention to product origin and seasonality, correctly reading labels, food storage methods and ways to use products at risk of being wasted, such as those approaching their use-by dates.

Responsible consumer choices also extend beyond food itself. POHiD points out that retailers in the non-food segment can support more informed consumption through reliable information, advice and the promotion of products and technologies that help reduce resource use, extend product life cycles and improve household product management.

The availability of solutions alone is not enough, however, unless everyday habits change too. Business responsibility therefore does not end with operational measures; it also includes supporting lasting changes in attitudes and sharing knowledge and good practices. Cooperation among companies, public institutions, civil society organisations and the education sector is particularly important, because responsible consumption requires the involvement of many market participants.

Retail sits between producers and consumers, so it plays a special role in reducing food waste. However, a substantial share of losses occurs outside retail itself, during production and, above all, in households. Retail chains now use modern technologies to forecast demand, optimise orders and logistics, and reduce surpluses. Effective food waste prevention programmes therefore require cooperation among producers, retailers and consumers.



**Renata Juskiewicz, President
of Polska Organizacja Handlu i
Dystrybucji (Polish
Organisation of Commerce and
Distribution)**

2.2. Jeronimo Martins Polska – a responsible food journey from producer to store

Every food product has value, which is why Biedronka takes action to reduce losses at different stages of products' journey to the customer. This includes supply-chain planning and management, as well as cooperation with local producers, which can shorten delivery times for selected products. These solutions are intended to keep products in the food supply and ensure they are used as intended.



**Agnieszka Koc, Environmental
& Sustainability Director,
Jeronimo Martins Polska**

At Biedronka, food waste reduction activities take place at several stages of the value chain. They include preventing surpluses through purchasing planning, demand forecasting and stock management. For products approaching their use-by dates, solutions such as markdowns and cooperation with Too Good To Go support sales. If food remains unsold despite these measures and meets donation requirements, it can be passed on to public benefit organisations. Products that cannot be used for human consumption are directed to further management in accordance with applicable regulations.

Demand and order planning

Reducing surpluses begins before goods are actually ordered. Biedronka uses sales-planning tools whose algorithms take into account factors including weather, seasonality and holiday periods. This process is supported by LDE (Luminate Demand Edge), which analyses several hundred variables, including sales, stock levels, promotions, prices, store location and opening hours. The aim is to match order volumes as closely as possible to anticipated demand.

Cooperation with local and small suppliers

Cooperation with domestic businesses forms part of Biedronka's efforts to reduce food loss and waste. In 2025, more than 94% of the food products offered by the chain came from Polish producers, and cooperation extended to more than 1,800 suppliers. For selected products, reducing transport distances can shorten the time needed to deliver them to stores and increase the time available for sale.

Since 2021, a programme of direct cooperation with local producers has been expanding. In 2025, it included nearly 300 active suppliers, among them numerous family farms. Selected seasonal fruit is delivered directly to stores nearest the farms. Bypassing distribution centres shortens the transport route, and some products go on sale on the day they are harvested.

One example of using products that might not have entered standard retail sale was the introduction of “imperfect apricots”: fruit meeting food quality and safety requirements but with minor cosmetic flaws. A similar approach is used in cooperation with local bakeries delivering bread directly to stores, shortening its delivery journey to those outlets.

Cooperation with suppliers also includes activities supporting food quality and safety standards. Audits and training cover topics including sustainable and regenerative agriculture, product quality, traceability and the operation of quality management systems. These activities form part of supplier management at earlier stages of the supply chain.

Distribution centres

Distribution centres play a key role in maintaining product quality and freshness by providing appropriate storage conditions and an uninterrupted cold chain. Biedronka uses 18 distribution centres whose locations support efficient store supply, shorter delivery routes and rapid product turnover. Their food safety systems undergo regular audits and certification.

Transport

Deliveries take place daily, and some stores receive them as often as 2-3 times a day. This frequency is intended to ensure product availability and maintain quality, and can help reduce losses. Transport conditions are monitored through the cold chain and the TMS (Transport Management System), which enables real-time transport planning and monitoring.

In-store product management

At store level, proper stock management, use-by date checks and the prompt introduction of sales-supporting measures are crucial. Products approaching their use-by dates are marked down or offered through Too Good To Go. If they remain unsold and meet food safety requirements, they can be donated to public benefit organisations.

Sales mechanisms that prevent food waste

Markdowns on products approaching their expiry dates

In more than 1,600 Biedronka stores, customers can buy food approaching its use-by date at reduced prices. Products carry a special orange label, making them easy to identify while shopping.

Cooperation with Too Good To Go

In selected stores, employees prepare food parcels available through the Too Good To Go app. The parcels contain products approaching their use-by dates and are priced at approximately 30% of the value of the items inside.

According to programme data, in 2025 customers collected almost 1.5 million parcels from more than 500 stores, representing an estimated 2,200 tonnes of food sold through the programme.

Food donations

Since 2016, Biedronka has donated products meeting food quality and safety requirements, including items approaching their use-by dates. In 2025, the most frequently donated categories were fruit and vegetables, bread, fresh meat and dairy products.

Thanks to volunteers from nearly 140 public benefit organisations, food from stores reaches people in need as food parcels or hot meals. In 2025, the value of products donated to these organisations was PLN 137 million.

Education and awareness-building

Biedronka's food waste reduction activities also include educating consumers and promoting responsible shopping habits. Around the turn of September and October, the chain runs an information and education campaign showing, for example, how to plan shopping, store food correctly and interpret date labels properly.

Another educational initiative is the “Dobra Torba” (“Good Bag”) campaign, run every two years in cooperation with the Federation of Polish Food Banks. Its 2025 edition promoted food waste prevention by encouraging customers to choose single pieces of fruit and vegetables and cosmetically imperfect produce. Part of the income from bag sales was allocated to supporting the Federation's food redistribution activities.

Food waste prevention also features in other educational events and initiatives run by the company.

One example is the partnership with Olsztyn Green Festival, where in 2024 visitors to Biedronka's area could learn how to store food correctly to keep it fresh for longer or receive e-books with sample recipes helping to reduce food waste. Food loss reduction also features in initiatives aimed at the chain's employees, including competitions, training materials and brochures on good practices in this area.

Summary

Biedronka's food waste reduction activities take place across the value chain: from cooperation with selected local suppliers and demand planning, through logistics and in-store product management, to solutions for some of the food that remains unsold. Measures include direct cooperation with producers and tools supporting sales of products approaching their use-by dates. These are complemented by food donation programmes and educational initiatives about food's value and ways to reduce waste.

2.3.Lidl Polska - from preventing surpluses to helping those in need

As part of our sustainability strategy, we undertake extensive action to reduce food waste, drawing on technology, social partnerships and education.

Operational Systems, Logistics and Product Management

We introduce food waste prevention measures at every stage of the supply chain. We have implemented our proprietary AutoDispo automated ordering system, which analyses stock levels and sales and aligns orders with demand. This allows us to order precisely the quantities our customers need for our stores, significantly reducing the risk of surpluses.

In-store initiatives and the customer offer

We are also expanding the “Kupuję, nie marnuję” (“I Buy, I Don't Waste”) initiative, marking down products approaching their use-by dates or with damage that does not affect quality. This offer is complemented by MIX OW bags containing a mix of fresh fruit and vegetables at attractive prices. We also prevent so-called “imperfect” fruit and vegetables from being discarded, such as misshapen beetroot, off-size apples, sun-scorched tomatoes or hail-damaged watermelons, by offering them at lower prices. This helps conserve resources and directly supports Polish suppliers.

Charitable cooperation and social engagement

We also donate surplus food that remains fit for consumption to people in need. Under the “Spizarnia Caritas” (“Caritas Pantry”) programme, we donate products approaching their use-by dates or with damaged packaging. We also organise in-store collections. In 2025, we donated more than 181 tonnes of food products approaching their use-by dates to Caritas. For years, we have also supported the modernisation and equipping of facilities helping people experiencing homelessness and other difficult life circumstances.

We also successfully completed a 3-month pilot in Poznań in cooperation with the City Hall and local NGOs, during which more than 2.7 tonnes of unsold bread were donated. The initiative is continuing, with plans to expand to further stores and cities.

Education and awareness-building

Every year, together with Caritas Polska, we organise the “Sztuka niemarnowania” (“The Art of Not Wasting”) campaign. In our promotional leaflets, online and in stores, we advise customers on shopping planning and food storage. We also help educate children by jointly developing the “EkoMisja” (“EcoMission”) programme with the Federation of Polish Food Banks. More than 210 thousand pupils from 2600 schools have already participated.

2.4. MediaMarkt Polska - how technology and advice help reduce food waste

An unused yoghurt, wilted vegetables, bread bought to stock up or a ready-made dish remembered too late: food waste often stems not from bad intentions, but from everyday haste, unsuitable storage and a lack of oversight of household stocks.

That is why reducing losses does not begin with shopping planning alone. It also matters whether products are stored under conditions suited to their type and whether we use appliances that help organise food at home.

An appliance that fits your lifestyle

A refrigerator or freezer should suit not only the size of the kitchen, but above all the household's daily needs. Different solutions will suit a single-person household, a family that does a large weekly shop, and people who often cook ahead or store substantial quantities of fresh produce.

Before buying, it is worth considering:

- how often we shop;
- how many people use the appliance;
- which products we store most often;
- whether we prepare meals for several days;
- whether we regularly freeze surplus food.

The answers help identify the right capacity, internal layout and features that will actually be useful. Good advice is not about pointing to the appliance with the most features, but about helping choose a solution suited to a particular household.

Features that make everyday life easier

Modern refrigerators and freezers offer solutions supporting the storage of different food categories. Separate zones with different temperatures can help store particularly sensitive products such as meat or fish. Humidity-controlled drawers help adjust conditions to the needs of fruit and vegetables.

Even distribution of cold air helps maintain more stable conditions throughout the appliance. Fast-cooling and fast-freezing functions can be useful after a large shop or when preserving a surplus portion of a prepared meal.

Internal organisation matters too. Separate drawers, compartments and the ability to store smaller portions make it easier to keep track of stocks and use what has been at home longest first.

In selected appliances, sensors and smart features provide additional support for everyday organisation. An open-door alert, temperature monitoring or access to selected settings through an app will not replace good habits, but can reduce the number of situations in which stored food is simply forgotten.

In-Store Advice Helps Consumers Make Better Choices

At MediaMarkt Polska, we believe technology delivers the greatest value when it meets real needs and is easy to understand. From a consumer's perspective, what matters is not only which features an appliance offers, but also whether their everyday benefits are clear.

Trust develops when customers receive clear information, can easily compare available solutions and understand what they are actually paying for. Convenience, in turn, means moving smoothly from recognising a need to choosing, purchasing and starting to use an appliance. The point is not to make choices faster at any cost, but to make decisions without unnecessary complications or worries that the chosen solution will not work at home.

Advice understood in this way supports more responsible consumption. It helps people buy appliances suited to their needs, use their capabilities and make better use of food already in the household.

Technology supports good habits

No appliance can decide by itself whether food will be used. It can, however, make the right actions easier. Regularly checking stocks, arranging products appropriately, monitoring dates, storing smaller portions and freezing surpluses are simple activities that help reduce losses.

Good storage therefore begins before an appliance is purchased, with understanding one's needs and choosing a solution that will be convenient to use every day. It ends with using the appliance consciously and using products at the right time.

The best technology is not the technology with the most features, but the technology that makes life easier, improves household stock management and reduces unnecessary waste, from making a good choice to using the last portion.

2.5. Żabka Group - implementation in everyday operations

Reducing food waste is also a task for retail. The key is to match the offer to actual demand as closely as possible. At Żabka, we use solutions including AI-based tools that help adapt the assortment to a specific location and store type. This allows us to better meet customers' actual needs while reducing the risk of surpluses.



**Jakub Malec, Group
Sustainable Food System
Manager at Żabka Polska**

Responsible food management throughout the value chain

Żabka Group treats food waste prevention as an integral part of a responsible business model. Its activities cover successive stages of the value chain: order planning, assortment management, logistics, sales of products approaching their use-by dates, redistribution of unsold food and management of unavoidable waste.

The Group's primary objective is to prevent surpluses and then ensure that as much unsold food as possible that remains fit for consumption is put to beneficial use. This approach covers its own operations, more than 13 thousand stores across Poland run by franchisees, cooperation with suppliers and solutions helping customers reduce food waste at home.

Consistent food waste prevention standards

The systematic approach is based on the Food Waste Prevention Policy adopted by Żabka Polska on 13 June 2024. The document establishes consistent standards for its own operations, stores and suppliers of private-label and branded products.

The policy structures activities according to the food management hierarchy: from preventing losses and reducing surpluses, through redistributing and reusing products that remain fit for consumption, to managing unavoidable waste, including energy recovery.

Using data and artificial intelligence

One of the key tools for reducing food waste is the use of data and artificial intelligence-based solutions. Żabka Polska analyses local shopping patterns and customer preferences to better align individual stores' assortments and order volumes with actual demand.

This helps ensure customers can find the products they need while reducing the risk of excessive stocks. Data use helps shift the focus from managing waste to preventing it.

The Food Waste 2.0 programme was also developed in 2025, focusing on product categories with the highest loss levels. Activities included assortment segmentation and changes to store planograms so that the offer better reflected actual product turnover at each location.

Responsible logistics and protecting product quality

Logistics solutions also support food loss reduction. Żabka Polska invests in specialised refrigerated transport that helps maintain appropriate conditions for fresh products and those requiring specific temperatures. These measures reduce the risk of quality deterioration and spoilage during transport and distribution.

The system also monitors products approaching their use-by dates, allowing action to be taken earlier to increase their chances of being sold or otherwise put to beneficial use.

The “NIEmarnujeMY” programme

An important part of the activities carried out directly in stores is “NIEmarnujeMY” (“We Don't Waste”). The programme enables franchisees to offer products approaching their use-by dates at reduced prices.

Discounted products, including ready meals, carry special stickers indicating the discount. The solution gives customers the opportunity to buy food that remains fit for consumption at more attractive prices, helps franchisees reduce losses and increases the chances that food will be eaten rather than thrown away.

The programme shows that environmental action can also bring measurable benefits to customers, franchisees and the organisation as a whole.

Cooperation with Too Good To Go and Foodsi

In 2025, Żabka Polska expanded its cooperation with Too Good To Go and Foodsi, platforms through which customers can buy parcels of unsold products that remain fit for consumption.

These activities saved a total of 3,599 kg of food worth PLN 50,507. Data from the Foodsi pilot also showed that 42% of users collecting a parcel bought products from the store's standard range on the same visit.

The results confirm that solutions reducing food waste can also meet customers' needs, support store traffic and bring operational benefits to franchisees.

Donating unsold food

If products can no longer be sold, the priority remains to use them in a way that creates social value. Żabka works with public benefit organisations and food banks, donating food that remains fit for consumption to people in need. Only food that cannot be consumed or reused is sent for treatment, including at biogas plants.

In this way, the Group's activities combine environmental and social dimensions, reducing waste and supporting the redistribution of food surpluses.

Appropriate product portioning

Food waste prevention also involves designing the offer. Products sold in appropriately sized portions help customers buy the amount of food they actually need. This is especially important for single-person households, consumers with mobile lifestyles and purchases made for a particular eating occasion.

This approach is reflected, for example, in the “Porcja Dobrego!” (“A Portion of Goodness!”) programme, which includes appropriately portioned private-label products. In 2025, the programme covered 140 products rated A or B under Nutri-Score. These products combine a balanced nutritional composition and convenience with the ability to buy a portion suited to a current need, without purchasing excessive quantities of food.

A second life for usable raw materials

Another example of good practice is using raw materials that remain fully suitable for use but might otherwise go unused because of their appearance, ripeness or sales characteristics.

One example is the use of two tonnes of very ripe bananas as an ingredient in banana bread. Although the ripe fruit might have been less visually appealing in conventional retail sale, it remained fully usable and worked well as a baking ingredient. The initiative demonstrated a practical application of circular economy principles in product development.

Education and building a culture of preventing waste

Technology and operational processes are complemented by educational activities. Żabka Group takes part in initiatives aimed at raising awareness of the environmental, social and economic consequences of food waste.

One example is participation in an Ideathon, during which student and doctoral-student teams worked on social, educational and technological solutions supporting food waste reduction among consumers and retail employees. The challenge sought tools to help build lasting habits and a culture of responsible food management.

The Group also joined the nationwide campaign “Good Taste Starts in Poland. I Don't Waste, I Choose Responsibly”, which links food waste prevention with informed consumer choices and the role of local and regional products.

Measurable results

The effectiveness of good practices is monitored using specific indicators. In 2025, Żabka Polska:

- reduced its food waste intensity by 24.9% compared with the 2020 baseline;
- put 87% of unsold food products in its own operations to beneficial use;
- saved 3,599 kg of food worth PLN 50,507 through cooperation with Too Good To Go and Foodsii;
- achieved estimated savings of PLN 14.5 million through food waste reduction.

The reduction achieved represents significant progress towards the target of reducing food waste intensity by 25% compared with 2020.

At the same time, the annual report indicates that, in 2025, the Group's absolute volume of food waste increased by more than 900 tonnes compared with 2024, largely because of the growth of Żabka Polska's operations and continued expansion. Despite the increase in absolute volumes, food waste intensity was reduced and more unsold products were put to use.

Summary

Żabka Group's good practice is based on the principle that effective food waste prevention requires simultaneous action at many levels. This includes:

- preventing surpluses through data analytics and artificial intelligence;
- adapting assortments and planograms to local demand;
- protecting product quality during transport and distribution;
- marking down products approaching their use-by dates;
- cooperating with Too Good To Go and Foodsii;
- donating food that remains fit for consumption to civil society organisations;
- portioning products appropriately;
- using surplus raw materials in new products;
- educating customers, employees, franchisees and business partners;
- monitoring outcomes through measurable indicators.

The strength of this approach lies in combining the network's scale, technology, the engagement of franchisees and suppliers, and customers' everyday purchasing decisions. Food waste reduction thus becomes an element of Żabka Group's operational management and business responsibility, rather than a one-off initiative.

2.6. Kaufland Polska – local production and preventing food waste

At Kaufland, supporting domestic producers and reducing food waste form part of a broader approach to responsible business. In line with Kaufland Group's sustainability strategy, we focus on four main areas: good nutrition, community support, environmental protection and resource conservation.

In practice, this means operating at many levels: from working with Polish and regional producers and developing a range rooted in Polish culinary traditions, to donating food to civil society organisations, educating consumers and running educational programmes for children.

Throughout the year, we undertake a range of initiatives supporting local producers, preventing food waste and protecting the environment:

- Cooperation with approximately 400 Polish producers and suppliers
- The K-Stąd Takie Dobre private label
- Regional weeks
- Promotion of products associated with Polish culinary traditions
- The “How Poles Prevent Food Waste” survey
- Cooperation with Food Banks, Caritas Polska and the St Brother Albert Aid Society
- The “Marnowanie? Nie mam w planie!” (“Waste? Not in My Plan!”) campaign
- Green Zones in stores: products approaching their expiry dates at lower prices
- The “Naturalisi - Imperfect Fruit and Vegetables” campaign
- The “Weź się nie ośmiecraj!” (“Don't Trash Your World!”) campaign

Supporting Polish production and local suppliers

Kaufland works with both large Polish producers and smaller local suppliers. Supporting domestic production is an important part of the chain's operations in Poland and includes expanding cooperation with regional businesses, contract farming and promoting products inspired by Polish culinary traditions.

The chain currently works with approximately 400 local suppliers whose products are sold in its stores. This allows producers to reach customers beyond their local markets, increase the scale of their operations and develop production. Cooperation also strengthens local supply chains while maintaining requirements for quality, freshness and regular deliveries.

One example is Grupa Piekuś, which began working with Kaufland in 2012, initially supplying one store in Inowrocław. Today, it serves 16 stores in the region, delivering approximately 1700 loaves of bread a day.

Contract farming and the “K-Stąd Takie Dobre” private label

One form of cooperation with Polish producers is contract farming, under which Kaufland plans demand for selected products in advance. This enables suppliers to prepare production more effectively for the season and expected sales. In 2025, the programme involved 47 suppliers who introduced 79 items, mainly fresh fruit and vegetables. Participating partners must meet specified food quality and safety requirements, including the Global G.A.P. standard.

Polish production is also supported by the “K-Stąd Takie Dobre” private label, comprising more than 400 products made according to traditional Polish recipes. They are developed with trusted Polish suppliers, and the range is expanded with both everyday shopping and periods of higher demand, such as holidays and seasonal sales peaks, in mind.

Regional weeks

Regional weeks are a series of activities promoting local producers and the diversity of Polish cuisine. Kaufland has so far organised Małopolska Week, Wielkopolska Week and Silesia Week.

As part of the initiative, products from regional suppliers are sold in stores across Poland, allowing them to reach consumers beyond their home regions. The range also includes products awarded the “Jakość Tradycja” (“Quality Tradition”) certificate. Special displays and communications help popularise traditional products and recipes characteristic of different parts of the country.

Preventing food waste

Reducing food waste is another area of Kaufland's activity. The chain combines in-store solutions with customer education and cooperation with civil society organisations. Its aim is both to reduce losses and to support consumers in making more informed purchasing decisions.

The “How Poles Prevent Food Waste” survey

In December 2025, Kaufland conducted a survey on Poles' everyday habits related to reducing food waste. The findings showed that 67.5% of respondents treat waste prevention as part of their daily lifestyle, while almost half take steps such as planning meals, preparing shopping lists, using leftovers and regularly checking the fridge and cupboards.

The most popular way to reduce losses is freezing food, reported by 60% of respondents. 40.3% prepare portions “for later”, and 37.4% creatively use products already at home. Younger consumers, up to the age of 34, are also more willing to use apps that help save products approaching their use-by dates. At the same time, only 8% donate surplus food to food-sharing points.

Kaufland also cooperates with Food Banks, Caritas Polska and the St Brother Albert Aid Society. Between March 2024 and February 2025, the chain donated food worth more than PLN 9.1 million. In October 2025 alone, more than 94 tonnes of products were put to use, including 7.5 tonnes of vegetables, fruit and bread.

The “Marnowanie? Nie mam w planie!” (“Waste? Not in My Plan!”) campaign

Since 2021, Kaufland has run the educational campaign “Marnowanie? Nie mam w planie!”, showing that reducing waste starts with simple decisions made while shopping and at home. Communications cover planning shopping, checking household stocks, proper food storage, using products already at home and freezing surplus food.

Educational activities are complemented by in-store solutions. Green Zones offer products approaching their use-by dates at lower prices. Kaufland also sells discounted bread from the previous day. From January to October 2025, customers bought more than 54 tonnes of bread in this way.

The chain also promotes zero-waste cooking by publishing recipes that use leftovers and products already available. Activities include education for children: the “Eko od dziecka - nie marnuję” (“Eco from Childhood - I Don't Waste”) programme was delivered in schools in 2022-2024.

The “Naturalsi - Imperfect Fruit and Vegetables” campaign

Launched in 2021, the “Naturalsi” line includes fruit and vegetables from Polish farmers that may differ in shape, size or appearance from products considered standard but still meet quality requirements and retain their taste and nutritional value.

By bringing these products into regular sale, Kaufland reduces the risk of food that remains fully fit for consumption being rejected solely for cosmetic reasons. The initiative also supports local producers and encourages customers to pay more attention to products' quality and nutritional value than to their appearance.

The “Weź się nie ośmiej!” (“Don't Trash Your World!”) campaign

Run jointly with packaging recovery organisation EKO-PUNKT, the “Weź się nie ośmiej!” campaign focuses on reducing waste and handling it responsibly after a product has been used.

As part of these activities, Kaufland educates customers about correct waste sorting, handling different waste types, using reusable bags and reducing the use of lightweight plastic shopping bags. The campaign also promotes material reuse, showing that responsible consumption does not end when a product is purchased.

2.7. OK Operator Kaucyjny - from returning packaging to preventing wasted resources

The deposit refund system not only makes it possible to recover high-quality material and put it back into circulation, but also helps build a new consumer habit. Beverage packaging ceases to be worthless waste and becomes a resource with a specific value. Accessibility will therefore be one of the conditions for the system's success. If returning packaging is simple and can be done during everyday shopping, it will more easily become a permanent part of our behaviour.



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The deposit refund system is a new solution in Poland, in effect since 1 October 2025. In many European countries, however, it has operated successfully for a dozen or more years, and in some cases for decades, for example in the Scandinavian countries.

Consumers themselves support introducing the deposit refund system in Poland. According to research by ARC Rynek i Opinia, as many as 88% of Poles liked the idea of introducing this model.¹ The key now is for it to operate in an accessible, intuitive and trouble-free way, so that consumers are willing to participate. Education is equally important, because only with public engagement can the deposit refund system deliver the expected results: collection rates of up to 90% for packaging covered by the scheme.

Why is the deposit refund system so important?

Modern economies treat waste as valuable raw materials that can be used repeatedly, benefiting consumers, the economy and, above all, the environment. In Poland, billions of beverage cans and bottles are placed on the market each year. They can successfully be processed and reused to produce new packaging. This means lower consumption of raw materials, water and energy, and lower CO₂ emissions than manufacturing new packaging from scratch.

The deposit refund system therefore offers shared benefits:

- reducing environmental pollution;
- increasing separate collection rates for packaging waste;
- increasing packaging waste recycling rates;
- developing appropriate, sustainable consumer habits;
- supporting Poland's transition towards a circular economy.

¹ Research by ARC Rynek i Opinia conducted in 2022 using CAWI, N=1048.

Why is separate municipal waste collection not enough?

By the end of 2024, deposit refund systems were operating in 16 European countries. Experience from countries where deposit schemes have been in place for years shows that this model significantly improves the efficiency of collecting used beverage packaging. Separate municipal waste collection is insufficient because many bottles and cans are not reused, for example because they are contaminated by product residues from other packaging. According to the Ministry of Climate and Environment, before the deposit refund system was introduced, Poland's separate collection rate for beverage packaging was around 45-55%. The deposit refund system can bring a real and substantial improvement, aiming for levels as high as 90%.

OK Operator Kaucyjny

As OK Operator Kaucyjny SA, we are part of an international group that also includes Lidl and Kaufland. Operational support is provided by PreZero, a leader in the circular economy.

The international group recognises its responsibility for the natural environment and takes action on sustainable development. The REset Plastic strategy, which guides its business activities, covers:

- plastic reduction;
- packaging redesign;
- recycling;
- removal of plastic packaging;
- innovation and awareness-building.

Each action aims to ensure responsible use of plastics, in line with the group-wide vision: "Less Plastic, More Circularity".

We are the only operator in Poland representing all deposit refund system stakeholders: producers placing products on the market, retailers and the waste management sector. This gives us a thorough understanding of their different perspectives and enables us to create a deposit refund system focused on the needs of different user groups.

Our mission is to encourage consumers to handle beverage packaging correctly.

Reverse logistics

Returning packaging to a reverse vending machine is only the beginning of the process. Once accepted, the packaging continues its journey through the system. Collected bottles and cans must be picked up from collection points, transported and directed to further processing. OK Operator has introduced a reverse logistics model, operating in the opposite direction to the traditional supply chain: the product travels from the producer to the store and consumer, while empty packaging returns from the market towards the infrastructure for managing recovered materials.

Scope of activities

Our activities include:

1. Collecting packaging waste from retail and wholesale outlets and other collection points.
2. Transporting packaging waste to locations where it will be further processed.
3. Collecting packaging waste to achieve the separate collection rates required by law.
4. Keeping the required records and preparing reports.
5. Settling deposits with retail and wholesale outlets and other collection points, including, in particular, funding deposit refunds to end users.
6. Financing the costs of packaging waste collection incurred by businesses operating retail and wholesale outlets and other collection points.

Since the system's launch, we have collected a total of more than 1.4 billion containers (approximately 30 thousand tonnes of material), working with 22 sorting facilities in Poland, including 6 certified facilities, and supplying clean, sorted material to recyclers.*

Educational mission

The deposit refund system could not function properly without an engaged public. It is therefore important not only to provide easy, widespread access to reverse vending machines, but also to educate consumers at every stage. As OK Operator Kaucyjny, we readily engage in a range of social and educational initiatives intended to spread knowledge and encourage people to return beverage packaging.

One unconventional initiative was "Do startu gotowi zbiórka!" ("Ready, Set, Collect!"), carried out with Lidl Polska during Pol'and'Rock Festival 2026. Alongside educational workshops and discussions with participants, we collected cans and bottles during the event. The result? Almost 725 thousand beverage containers collected at a single event!

Another example is "Oddaj opakowanie, zabierz wspomnienia" ("Return the Packaging, Take Home the Memories"), a campaign run by BOO Organizacja Odzysku Opakowań i Odpowiedzialności Producenta SA, of which we were a partner. Combined with direct promotion of returns to reverse vending machines, the initiative aimed to reach residents and tourists visiting Poland's coast. Run in popular tourist resorts, it taught people that handling packaging correctly is simple and that every return helps build good habits and protect the environment.

*Data as at 21.09.2026.

We also actively participate in major industry events, including the XXXV Economic Forum in Karpacz, the European Economic Congress, Retail Trends 2026 and the 30th Comprehensive Waste Management Conference - Waste Management Industry Convention, sharing our perspective, experience and ideas. OK Operator Kaucyjny's experts also spread knowledge about correct packaging management and bottle-to-bottle circularity, including through cooperation with the media and participation in podcast recordings.

The website operatorkaucyjny.pl/edukacja/ offers an extensive knowledge base in which we explain the deposit refund system and circular waste management in a clear and accessible way.

Reducing food and resource waste is a challenge requiring cooperation along the entire journey: from producers, through retail and consumer behaviour, to responsible waste management. New systems and habits can initially be difficult to introduce or get used to. The deposit refund system, however, is a solution that benefits us all. It teaches responsibility in a simple, tangible way and helps create a mature, environmentally aware society. The simple act of placing a container in a reverse vending machine really does make a difference.

2.8. PanParagon - shopping planning as a way to reduce food waste

Food waste reduction can begin before entering a shop. One of its foundations is proper shopping planning, checking household stocks and buying quantities that can actually be used. The PanParagon app supports consumers in organising this process, from preparing a shopping list and comparing offers to analysing expenditure after shopping.

Shopping planning

Preparing a shopping list can help reduce unplanned decisions and unnecessary purchases. The starting point should be checking the fridge, freezer and cupboards and planning meals around products already at home.

A list need not mean a detailed menu for the entire week. It can simply include missing ingredients needed for planned meals. For fresh food, identifying the required quantity or weight also helps reduce the risk of overstocking.

PanParagon enables users to create shopping lists in the app and share them with other household members. This can make joint planning easier and reduce situations in which several people buy the same product.

Using promotions in line with actual needs

Promotions can make shopping more economical, but only when they concern products that will actually be used. With fresh food, buying more packs or multipacks can create surpluses if the household cannot use them in time.

Before taking advantage of a promotion, it is therefore worth considering not only the price, but also the quantity, use-by date and ability to use the product in the coming days. This is particularly important for highly perishable products.

The PanParagon app lets users browse promotional leaflets from different chains and search for offers on specific products. Selected items can then be added directly to the shopping list, making a promotion part of a previously prepared plan rather than an impulse encountered only in the shop.

Support while shopping

While shopping, users can tick off products on their prepared list as they go. This helps them follow their plan and reduces the risk of missing necessary items or buying more units of products already in the basket.

The app can also store loyalty cards, bringing planning, promotions and shopping tools together in one place.

Tracking expenditure and purchases after returning home

Planning does not end at the checkout. PanParagon allows receipts to be stored digitally and used to generate expenditure statistics by month and category. This helps users better observe their purchasing habits and see which products account for the largest share of their spending.

Regular expenditure reviews can also reveal recurring patterns, such as frequent purchases of similar products, excessive buying in particular categories or taking advantage of promotions that do not reflect the household's actual needs.

The app also allows users to store information about deposit refund vouchers and track their validity, making them easier to use on subsequent shopping trips.

Technology as support for responsible decisions

PanParagon does not decide what consumers should buy or in what quantities. It can, however, organise the individual shopping stages and make it easier to follow a previously agreed plan.

Combining household stock checks, list-making, conscious use of promotions and spending analysis can support more considered food management.

From this perspective, reducing waste begins not when a product is already at risk of being thrown away, but when the decision to buy it is made. The better a purchase matches the household's actual needs, the greater the chance that the product will be used as intended.



**Download the free
PanParagon app**

Chapter III

Conclusions and Recommendations



3.1. What next? Development directions for responsible consumption

The examples described in this report show that food waste prevention activities increasingly focus on preventing surpluses, not only managing them afterwards. Alongside markdowns, donations and redistribution, better demand forecasting, shorter supply chains and cooperation with local producers are becoming more important. Packaging is also becoming an important part of responsible resource management, as illustrated by the deposit refund system.

From responding to losses to preventing them

One of the most important directions of change is identifying surplus risks early. Data on demand, seasonality, location and stock levels allow production, orders and assortments to be better matched to actual needs. This means waste reduction activities can begin before a product appears that cannot be sold or used.

Discounting products approaching their use-by dates, redistribution and donations remain necessary, but preventing surpluses is becoming more important.¹ This approach shifts the focus from waste management to resource management.

Technology as support for decisions

Technology can support both businesses and consumers. In business, it enables stock monitoring, demand forecasting, date checks and more efficient routing of products for reuse. In households, shopping and meal-planning tools and solutions supporting proper product storage can play a similar role.

Technology's importance lies in making consumer decisions easier rather than replacing them. The most useful solutions address specific problems and are easy to incorporate into everyday behaviour.

Product origin matters too

Choices also concern where food comes from and the journey it takes before reaching consumers. For some products, cooperation with domestic and local producers can shorten supply chains, reduce transport time and extend the time available to sell fresh food.²

Choosing local products has a broader dimension than distance alone: it means supporting regional producers, retaining value in the local economy and having greater awareness of food origins. While shopping, consumers can therefore consider not only price and convenience, but also product information, origin and production methods.

Responsibility after using the product

Handling packaging is also an important part of responsible consumption. The deposit refund system shows that a consumer's decision after consuming a product affects the circulation of materials: returning a bottle or can brings its packaging into an organised collection and recycling system.³

This is an example of a solution in which an individual habit is part of a larger system requiring cooperation among consumers, retailers, producers and operators. Consumer responsibility therefore covers the entire cycle of using a product, not only its purchase and consumption.

The direction of change can be described as a transition from individual actions to comprehensive resource management.

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³ Ministry of Climate and Environment, System kaucyjny – zasady oraz pytania i odpowiedzi, gov.pl.

3.2. Law, incentives and cooperation - how can we create conditions for responsible choices?

Consumer behaviour does not depend solely on individual decisions. The environment in which decisions are made is highly significant: the availability of solutions, clarity of information, legal regulations, infrastructure and cooperation among business, public administration and civil society organisations.

This applies to reducing food waste, donating surpluses, choosing products of a particular origin and using the deposit refund system. The easier and more accessible these solutions are, the more likely they are to become consumers' everyday habits.

Poland's legal framework for preventing food waste

In Poland, the main law directly addressing this issue is the Act on Counteracting Food Waste. Its purpose is to reduce both the phenomenon itself and its negative social, environmental and economic consequences.¹

Polish law also provides tax measures supporting charitable food donations. Under specified conditions, donations of food products to public benefit organisations are exempt from VAT,² while the production cost or purchase price of donated products may be treated as a tax-deductible expense.³

The law can therefore not only impose obligations but also create conditions that favour donating food that remains fit for consumption instead of withdrawing it from circulation.

Different mechanisms - one shared goal

Experience in other European countries shows that responsible food management can be supported through different instruments.

In Italy, legislation adopted in 2016 made it easier to donate surplus food for social purposes. The system also allows the amount of donated food to be linked to a reduction in local waste charges, providing an additional economic incentive for businesses.⁴

In Spain, a law in force since 2025 introduces a hierarchy for managing surpluses. Priority is given to preventing them and, where food remains fit for consumption, to using it for human consumption, including through donations. The legislation also provides for loss prevention plans and educational activities.⁵

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⁴ Legge 19 agosto 2016, n. 166 (Law No 166 of 19 August 2016), Italy.

⁵ Ley 1/2025, de 1 de abril, de prevención de las pérdidas y el desperdicio alimentario (Law 1/2025 of 1 April on the Prevention of Food Loss and Waste), Spain.

3.3. From declarations to action - what do we need to make more responsible choices?

The campaign survey shows that consumers associate a responsible approach to food not only with saving money, but also with respect for food and the work of those involved in producing it, concern for the environment and setting a good example for others.

Consumer responsibility therefore has economic, social and environmental dimensions. Translating these values into everyday decisions and habits remains the key challenge.

Good intentions need simple solutions

This is particularly evident in attitudes towards sharing surplus food. The survey shows that many consumers are willing to pass on products they will not use themselves. In practice, however, obstacles include a lack of convenient ways to give food away, concerns about responsibility for its condition and not knowing whom to give it to.¹ A willingness to act responsibly therefore needs simple, accessible solutions. A similar mechanism may apply to buying products approaching their use-by dates, choosing local food or returning packaging through the deposit refund system. Solutions that are understandable, easily accessible and fit into daily routines are more likely to become a permanent part of consumer behaviour.

Clear Information Supports Responsible Choices

Responsible decisions require understandable information about use-by dates, storage, ingredients and product origin.

Knowing where and by whom food was produced makes it possible to take its local or domestic origin into account when shopping. Choosing local food can be part of informed consumption, especially when consumers want to support shorter supply chains and producers from their own region.³ A choice should not, however, be reduced to a single criterion. Price, quality, quantity, origin, intended use and the risk of waste can be assessed together.

The deposit refund system - responsibility after using the product

The deposit refund system shows that responsible behaviour does not end at purchase or consumption. Consumers keep packaging and return it to a collection point, allowing it to be reprocessed.²

Convenience plays a major role: accessible return points and a simple process determine whether returning packaging becomes an everyday habit. Consumer responsibility directly meets the responsibility of the businesses and institutions that create the infrastructure.

Putting Knowledge into Practice

Education remains one of the most important tools. It should not only inform people about the consequences of food waste but also develop everyday skills: planning shopping, understanding packaging labels, storing products, using surpluses, assessing food origin and handling packaging correctly. 69.1% of respondents agree that reducing food waste at home can have a real impact on the environment and the world around them.¹

Education from an early age is particularly important. Schools can teach not only waste prevention, but also respect for food, informed product choices, understanding food origins and wise use of resources.

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3.4. Shared responsibility - recommendations for businesses, consumers and institutions

Consumer choices do not occur in isolation from the market. Consumers can plan shopping, choose local products, reduce waste and use the deposit refund system, but their options also depend on companies' offers, available infrastructure, how information is communicated and solutions created by public institutions.

Businesses should create conditions that help make better use of food and enable consumers to make informed decisions. This includes reducing surplus risks early, passing unsold food on for further use, communicating product information clearly, adapting packaging and portion sizes to users' needs, and developing cooperation with domestic and local producers. Sharing good practices among companies, institutions and civil society organisations is also important.

Consumers begin by consciously identifying their own needs. This includes planning shopping, paying attention to product quantities and origins, using products properly and sharing food that remains fit for consumption but cannot be used at home. It can also mean choosing domestic and local products more often when they suit the household's needs and circumstances. Respect for resources and the work of people involved in producing, transporting and selling food also matters. Responsibility extends to packaging. Using the deposit refund system is an everyday action through which consumers can participate in the circular economy. For it to become widespread, accessible infrastructure and effective cooperation among retailers, producers and system operators are needed.

Public and educational institutions and civil society organisations can create conditions that make responsible choices easier. Clear regulations, accessible infrastructure, effective food redistribution mechanisms and education tailored to different audiences are needed. Schools can develop practical skills relating to food and resources, while cooperation among public administration, academia, business and civil society organisations allows activities to reach a larger scale.

The report's central conclusion is that responsible consumption needs to be viewed as a whole. Preventing food waste remains an important part of it, but responsibility begins earlier, with choosing a product, and continues beyond that to encompass how food is used, where it comes from, the possibility of sharing surpluses and what happens to packaging. Responsible consumers do not act alone: their decisions form part of a system jointly shaped by businesses, producers, retailers, institutions and civil society organisations.

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Partners' good practices and solutions

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