Food wastage – moral degradation of mankind

Racz A*

University of Applied Health Sciences, Zagreb, Croatia

The FAO estimates that each year approximately 1.3 billion tonnes of food, which amounts to approximately one third, by weight, of all food produced for human consumption in the world, is lost or wasted. Food wastage in the world where 800 million people suffer from hunger is not only an agricultural, economical or sociological issue, but above all the moral failure of the entire western society. This paper critically analyses European Parliament document (A8-0175/2017) and policies on food wastage. Food wastage happens along the entire food supply chain, but the sector contributing the most to food waste in the EU are households (53 %). This contributes to climate change, with a global carbon footprint of about 8 % of total anthropogenic global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. In Europe, the approximately 89 megatonnes of wasted food generate 170 Mt CO_2 eq. per year. The production of the 30 % of wasted food is responsible for an additional 50 % of water resource irrigation use and a large loss of biodiversity. At the same time, almost 793 million people in the world are malnourished and more than 700 million live below the poverty line. It is unquestionable that unsufficient nutrition is responsible for approximately 3.1 million of all deaths in children under five. Facing that fact, any irresponsible use of natural resources and any food wastage should therefore be considered morally unacceptable. Any effective action to reduce food waste requires a comprehensive rethinking of how we produce, market, and consume food at each step in the food supply and consumption chain. Action should not only focus on the change in consumers habits, but go deep into radical destruction of neoliberal capitalistic paradigm based on immoral and perverted overproduction and overconsumption with unfair distribution of wealth in the world.

KEY WORDS: *carbon footprint; consumer behaviour; ecological footprint; policy on food wastage*

Contamination of foodstuffs from Slovenia with toxic elements and safety considerations

Kirinčič S[1]**, Šömen Joksić A[1], Zupan M[2], Ivanoš I[3], Rep P[3], Rotter E[3], Ivartnik M[1], and Grčman H[2]

National Institute of Public Health[1], Biotechnical Faculty, University of Ljubljana[2], Ljubljana, National Laboratory for Health, Environment and Food[3], Maribor, Slovenia

The aim of this study was to evaluate the occurrence of regulated toxic elements in foods from the Slovenian market and to estimate the potential health risks for the population. The concentrations of heavy metals were determined in an accredited laboratory with atomic absorption spectrophotometry or inductively coupled plasma mass spectrometry. Arsenic (As), mercury (Hg), and tin (Sn) were analysed in a limited number of samples and only in particular food groups like rice products, fish, and canned food, respectively, and food for children. The results on total As and Sn did not show a high share of non-compliance with Regulation (ES) No 1881/2006, which was not the case for total total Hg in fish. Multi-annual statistics of lead (Pb) results showed relatively lower mean concentrations in most foods comparing the EU and other studies. Among all of the studied toxic elements, cadmium (Cd) seemed to be one of the most problematic concerning chronic health risks. The highest contribution to dietary Cd exposure came from cereal based foods and vegetables, although the highest mean concentrations of Cd were found in the groups of fish and seafood and meat and edible offal. Potatoes were also an important contributor to Cd exposure. Higher than average concentrations of Cd in grain and potato samples, which were grown predominantly in Slovenia, could be attributed to the characteristics of the Slovenian soil. Infants, toddlers, and other children are in the whole population, together with high consumers, the most exposed to toxic elements.

KEY WORDS: *arsenic; food; health risks; mercury; tin*

**aracz@zvu.hr*

***stanka.kirincic@nijz.si*

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