



Food
Waste

Inspiring Consumers to Waste Less Food

Best Practices For Retailers and Manufacturers

www.tcgffoodwaste.com

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Why Addressing Consumer Food Waste Matters

Food waste is a critical issue that affects food security, the environment, and the economy. Globally, an estimated 931 million tonnes of food are wasted annually, with households contributing to approximately 60% of this waste, according to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Reducing food waste is essential for achieving the UN's Sustainable Development Goal 12.3: halving global food waste at retail and consumer levels by 2030. Consumer education and engagement are key to this transformation.

The Role of Consumer Goods Companies

Our Food Waste Coalition of Action is dedicated to achieving the UN's SDG 12.3 target: halving food waste at retail and consumer levels by 2030. Companies play a pivotal role in shaping consumer habits, perceptions, and purchasing decisions. By leveraging packaging, marketing, and digital channels, brands can help consumers make more informed choices and reduce waste at home.

However, driving change at the household level comes with unique challenges. From deeply rooted cultural attitudes toward food to the misconception that individual actions are too small to make an impact, there are many barriers that hinder progress. Overcoming these challenges requires innovative approaches to communicate effectively with consumers and inspire them to take action to lower their household waste. Together, as an industry, we are committed to empowering people to make a tangible difference in the fight against food waste.

About This Guide

This publication provides best practices and proven messaging strategies for effectively communicating food waste reduction messages to consumers. It draws on insights shared during the Coalition's Consumer Engagement Showcase Sessions, held between late 2024 and early 2025. These sessions brought together leading consumer goods companies to highlight successful campaigns, real-world case studies, and innovative approaches that help influence behavioral change.



In the pages that follow, we explore key strategies to drive impactful consumer engagement on food waste, including:

- **Understanding Your Audience:** Conducting research to ensure local relevance and resonance.
- **Securing Leadership Buy-In and Internal Alignment:** Embedding food waste reduction into company priorities.
- **Making It Simple and Clear:** Standardising date labels to reduce confusion.
- **Using Positive Framing:** Encouraging mindful eating habits in a motivating way.
- **Making It Personally Relevant:** Tying food waste reduction to consumers' daily lives and routines.
- **Engaging Through Interactive and Digital Content:** Using digital tools to create meaningful connections.
- **Fostering Collaboration and Partnerships:** Working with allies across sectors to amplify impact.

By implementing these strategies, companies can help consumers become part of the solution — creating lasting change at scale.



Foreword from the Coalition Co-Chairs



Annabelle Souchon,
Group CSR Manager, Bel



Chris Franke,
Senior Manager of Global
Sustainability, Walmart

As Co-Chairs of the CGF's Food Waste Coalition of Action, we encourage you to use this practical guide, which was created to help companies inspire their consumers to waste less food. Food waste is not just a sustainability challenge—it's a human, economic, and environmental one. At the household level, the choices consumers make each day shape the future of our food systems. But for those choices to shift, they must first be inspired.

Over the past few years, our Coalition has launched several initiatives to accelerate this change. Our *#TooGoodToWaste* campaign encourages companies to raise awareness and share practical tips for reducing household food waste—fostering a community of mindful food consumers. And in 2024, we partnered with the Collaboration for Healthier Lives Coalition to launch **The Sustainable Kitchen**—an online platform showcasing real-world examples of effective consumer communication. Designed to drive awareness and encourage healthier, anti-waste habits, it sets the stage for the deeper insights you'll find in this guide.

This new publication builds on that momentum. It brings together proven strategies, successful case studies, and practical advice from leading companies that are engaging consumers in meaningful, measurable ways. From simplifying date labels to creative campaigns that reframe leftovers as opportunities, the stories inside demonstrate the power of clear, localised, and empowering messaging which frames the topic of food waste positively for the consumer.

At Bel, we've seen the value of embedding food waste reduction into our global brands' communications, ensuring they align with business priorities while sparking change in the home. At Walmart, standardising our labelling through the "Best If Used By" initiative has helped millions of customers reduce waste while making smarter choices.

What unites all these efforts is a belief in the collective impact of our actions—and in the value of collaboration. This guide is more than a resource; it's an invitation to join a growing movement committed to consumer engagement and progress toward SDG 12.3.

**Let's keep the momentum
going—together.**



Effective Messaging Strategies & Case Studies

Understanding Your Audience: The Importance of Research and Local Relevance

1

To truly shift behaviours around food waste, companies must start with one essential principle: know your audience. Effectively tackling household food waste necessitates a deep understanding of the target audience, underpinned by thorough research and a keen awareness of local contexts.



Case Study

Kerry Group

Tailoring Tools and Messaging Through Consumer Insights

Kerry Group, while operating in a B2B environment, recognized the paramount importance of understanding consumer behaviors and regional nuances in tackling food waste. They developed the Food Waste Estimator tool with a conscious effort to make the issue meaningful to consumers by comparing the impact of food waste reduction to everyday habits relevant in their homes.

To ensure relevance, Kerry's tool explicitly asks users for their region, noting that food waste behaviors differ significantly across the world. This allows for more contextually relevant comparisons in the results, such

as the amount of electricity that could be saved. Furthermore, Kerry Group conducted in-depth consumer research, employing surveys and video diaries across multiple countries, to gain valuable insights into consumer attitudes towards food waste, preservation, and ingredient preferences. This research helped them understand cultural nuances, such as the symbolic importance of bread in some regions. By leveraging these consumer insights and acknowledging regional variations, Kerry Group aimed to create more impactful and relatable tools and messaging for the industry to use with end consumers.

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If we want to change food waste habits, we have to meet consumers where they are — culturally, emotionally, and practically. Understanding what matters in their kitchens and in their daily lives is what makes our tools resonate.



Bert De Vegt,
VP and Pillar Executive,
Food Protection
& Preservation



Case Study

Ahold Delhaize USA

Learning Locally: Engaging Customers to Reduce Food Waste

Ahold Delhaize USA companies have for decades been at the forefront of efforts to eliminate food waste, from pioneering food rescue programs to donating billions of meals to individuals and families in need. Next up? New strategies to engage customers in this important work. Efforts to date by Ahold Delhaize USA brands underscore the importance of understanding the consumer audience. Ahold Delhaize USA brands already engage consumers on food waste through store markdown programs, which encourage customers to purchase food nearing the end of its shelf life to avoid it going to waste. In-store nutritionists and dietitians also help customers keep food waste top of mind with messages like “shop smarter, cook more from less.”

Recently, this work has gained momentum with nutritionists and dietitians creating food waste-related content—such as “waste-free menu planning” and “amp up your leftovers.”

These messages are shared through in-store magazines, cooking demos, and community programming. Further efforts are underway to continue to build by engaging consumers through established channels like cooking classes and in-store demonstrations.

Ahold Delhaize USA brands work to align efforts with consumer needs and local relevance, including providing information on meal planning, home ingredient tracking, recipes for leftovers, proper food storage, and “did you know” information about date labels. Other forthcoming efforts include things like informing shoppers about local initiatives like curbside composting, where available, and thinking about internal associates as customers in the store too and helping them understand their role in food waste reduction. The common thread is local engagement and the value of engaging locally to strengthen comprehensive and audience-focused food consumer waste reduction strategies.



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Some of the most effective food waste messaging happens locally in Ahold Delhaize USA brand stores – through dietitians, community demos, and everyday conversations. Our focus now is building on that and turning insights from local programs into larger strategies for broader impact.



Christine Gallagher
Manager, Sustainable Operations, Ahold Delhaize USA

Leadership Buy In and Internal Alignment

2

Securing leadership support and aligning internal teams are foundational steps in any successful consumer-facing food waste initiative. These examples show how companies have built momentum from within—by framing sustainability as a business opportunity, embedding food waste messaging into company culture, and empowering employees at all levels to contribute to shared goals.



Case Study

Bel Group

Securing Internal Buy-in for #TooGoodToWaste

Bel Group’s global consumer engagement campaign, #TooGoodToWaste, emphasizes the seamless integration of sustainable objectives within the brand’s communication, rooted in relevant consumer needs. Rather than positioning sustainability initiatives as educational, the campaign focuses on delivering positive messages based on consumer insights and concrete, helpful tips for them. The key is to make sustainability feel natural and essential, enhancing the brand strategy and justifying the investment in these communications. By demonstrating how engaging consumers on anti-waste habits supports overall business goals, Bel has successfully aligned the campaign with existing marketing strategies, making it an integral part of annual plans for local teams. This strategic alignment helps to ensure that time and budget allocations serve both sustainability and brand objectives effectively.

Furthermore, Bel implemented a multi-tiered coordination system with a global coordinator working alongside brand marketing and local CSR champions. This structure ensured consistent messaging and engagement across diverse markets. Continuous communication through bi-monthly CSR talks played a vital role in maintaining focus, allowing local teams to share progress and stay updated. Importantly, Bel empowered leadership by equipping them with concise, impactful messaging for corporate communication, encouraging them to take an active role in sharing the campaign’s goals through their own social media channels. This top-down support further amplified the message and encouraged internal engagement. By demonstrating a clear link between consumer engagement, business priorities, and securing leadership endorsement, Bel effectively fostered internal alignment for their food waste campaign.



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Sustainability isn’t just an add-on; it’s at the heart of our strategy. By aligning our efforts with consumer needs and ensuring our communications resonate locally, we drive not only internal buy-in but also create impactful and efficient messages that engage communities around the world.



Annabelle Souchon
Group CSR
Manager, Bel



Case Study

Tesco

“Hearts and Minds” Training to Inspire Internal Engagement

Tesco’s “Hearts and Minds” training programme was developed to support internal alignment around the company’s food waste reduction goals. The aim was to help colleagues across the business understand how their day-to-day roles relate to broader environmental and social issues, particularly the link between food waste and climate change.

Rather than focusing purely on processes, the training encouraged staff to reflect on their own food habits and how small actions at work and at home could contribute to reducing waste. The initiative was designed to be accessible to Tesco’s diverse workforce and included a mix of animation, real-life video stories, interactive quizzes, and a custom learning game modelled on “Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?”

The content also included practical advice, such as how to avoid overproduction or over-ordering in-store, and how food donations can help prevent surplus from being discarded. The programme aimed to equip colleagues with tools they could use both professionally and personally.

Initial feedback from staff indicated that the training was well received. A high percentage of participants reported feeling more informed about the company’s sustainability approach and better equipped to support food waste reduction efforts in their roles.



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Helping our colleagues understand the real-world impact of food waste has been key to building engagement. When people connect what they do every day to something bigger, it becomes more than just a task — it becomes something they care about.



Cheryl Wetherburn
Food Surplus
Manager, Tesco

Use Positive Framing

3

Rather than guilt-driven messaging, brands should emphasise the benefits of food waste reduction, such as saving money, enjoying food more, and making sustainable choices. By highlighting what consumers *gain*—from tasty meals to cost savings and a sense of purpose—positive messaging empowers people to take action and feel good doing it.



Case Study

Bel Group

Portion Guidance Campaign

Bel Group identified a key opportunity to connect with consumers on the topic of food waste by focusing on the exciting potential of leftovers. Their strategy centered on transforming the perception of surplus food from waste to a source of culinary innovation.

This consumer-focused initiative involved providing easily accessible and inspiring resources demonstrating how to turn everyday leftovers into appealing new dishes.

Through its popular and trusted brands, Bel shared simple, delicious recipes designed to inspire creativity in the kitchen. These recipes encouraged consumers to repurpose leftovers, tired vegetables, and other surplus ingredients into tasty, satisfying meals, making sustainability both fun and achievable.

Additionally, step-by-step video demonstrations made by influencers were shared via social media platforms, making the process of repurposing leftovers visually clear and simple to follow.

To further enhance their message and build trust, Bel Brands collaborated with chefs. These culinary experts showcased how to transform common leftovers into delicious meals, providing consumers with professional inspiration and guidance.

The content shared by influencers in a simple and engaging way generated very strong engagement on social media.

The company’s broader consumer engagement strategy also included proactive communication about the advantages of individual portions in reducing food waste at home. By offering controlled portions, Bel helps consumers manage their food consumption more effectively, minimizing leftovers and spoilage. Beyond waste reduction, these portions also deliver just the right nutritional intake, making it easier for families to enjoy balanced meals, all while maintaining a playful, convenient format that fits into busy lifestyles.



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Through engaging campaigns providing practical tips, Bel empowers consumers to make smart, sustainable choices without sacrificing taste or convenience. One of the most effective ways to reduce food waste is by showing people that leftovers aren’t a burden — they’re an opportunity. When we make repurposing food feel creative, practical, and even enjoyable, it becomes part of everyday life.



Annabelle Souchon
Group CSR Manager,
Bel Group



Case Study

Kerry Group

Consumer-Friendly Language

Kerry Group, a leading B2B ingredient supplier specialising in food protection and preservation, has found an innovative way to engage both industry stakeholders and consumers in the food waste conversation—by using positive framing and consumer-friendly language.

Traditionally focused on technical shelf-life solutions, Kerry recognised that discussions around preservatives and food safety can often feel distant or alienating to consumers and even some industry players. To shift perceptions, Kerry began “speaking consumer,” tapping into behavioural insights and reframing shelf-life extension as a tool for good. By positioning preservation as a means to save money, reduce waste, and feed more people, Kerry transforms it from a purely technical manufacturing tactic into a meaningful sustainability action.

A standout initiative is Kerry’s Food Waste Estimator, a free, interactive tool co-developed with Too Good To Go. It helps individuals

understand the personal and environmental impact of reducing food waste at home. By entering simple inputs such as household size, grocery spend, and waste habits, users receive relatable, tangible results—like money saved or smartphone charges worth of energy conserved. These feel-good, concrete outcomes make food waste prevention both manageable and impactful.

Kerry also invested in extensive global consumer research—including video diaries and surveys—to uncover how people perceive food waste and preservation in different cultural contexts. These insights directly inform Kerry’s communications strategy and product innovation, ensuring messages resonate broadly and meaningfully.

By framing food waste as a solvable challenge with both personal and global benefits, Kerry bridges the gap between scientific expertise and emotional engagement—empowering action across the entire supply chain.



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By using positive framing and consumer-friendly language, we’re able to connect on an emotional level, showing that extending shelf life isn’t just a technical solution—it’s a way to save money, reduce waste, and make a real difference in sustainability.



Bert De Vegt,
VP and Pillar Executive,
Food Protection
& Preservation

Make It Personally Relevant

Connect food waste reduction to consumers’ daily habits and routines. Show them how small changes can make a big difference. When people see how food-saving actions fit naturally into their lives—like during breakfast, shopping, or school lunches—they’re more likely to embrace them and turn awareness into lasting habits.



Case Study

Grupo Bimbo

“Tapas” as a Cultural and Culinary Shift

In Colombia, Grupo Bimbo uncovered a surprising household behavior: bread crusts were regularly discarded by consumers, resulting in the waste of an estimated 240 million slices of bread annually. Rather than approaching this as a purely environmental issue, the team rooted the solution in cultural relevance and everyday family life. The “Tapas” campaign reframed crusts—not as scraps, but as valuable ingredients that could be easily used in daily meals.

By connecting the concept to local eating habits and household routines, Grupo Bimbo normalized the use of crusts through simple, relatable messaging. Recipe booklets and social content focused on typical consumption

moments like breakfast or snacks, encouraging small but meaningful behavior changes. The idea was to demonstrate how everyone—especially families—could do more with what they already had at home. In-store promotions and messaging made the connection tangible by showing crusts as the starting point for everyday dishes.

This “everyday relevance” approach helped consumers feel personally empowered to make a difference in their kitchens. By turning a commonly discarded item into a useful one, Grupo Bimbo successfully shifted food waste from an abstract issue into something visible, solvable, and part of consumers’ normal routines.



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We are always thinking about what solutions we can provide to consumers to avoid food waste. Not only get closer to our zero food waste goal, but also get 2 more meals out of every bag of bread.



Natalia Carrillo Aguirre, Colombia
Marketing Manager,
Grupo Bimbo



Case Study

Danone

Yoghurt Shelf-Life Awareness

EU & US research showed a significant share of yoghurt waste at home was caused by consumers discarding products based solely on date labels, even when the yoghurt was still safe to eat. In an attempt to address this, Danone transitioned 100% of its eligible yoghurt and plant based products in Europe from “use by” to “best before” dates—a move designed to reduce food waste in the home without compromising safety.

The distinction is important: “use by” dates relate to safety, while “best before” dates refer to quality. Given yoghurt’s natural acidity and production process, when stored correctly, it remains safe to consume beyond the best before date if it still looks, smells, and tastes normal.

The change followed a structured four-step process: assessing local regulations and food safety; confirming that product quality—like acidity and texture—met consumer expectations; aligning with key stakeholders; and updating packaging and communication materials.

Danone partnered with Too Good To Go to build consumer understanding, using the “Look, Smell, Taste – Don’t Waste” logo on packs and conducting in-store tastings to demonstrate that yoghurt can still be safe after the best before date.

By empowering consumers to trust their senses, this initiative helps reduce unnecessary household waste and reinforces Danone’s commitment to sustainability and smarter consumption habits.



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Date labelling is a powerful tool to cut waste — but it requires disciplined, consistent execution. This was a real cross-functional effort aligned with what consumers are asking for to drive tangible reductions.



Gokce Gultekin
Global Zero Waste
Lead, Danone

Engage Consumers Through Interactive & Digital Content

5

Utilise interactive tools, digital platforms, and engaging content to educate and inspire consumers about food waste reduction. By meeting people where they are—on social media, apps, and streaming platforms—brands can make sustainability messages more relatable, actionable, and shareable.



Case Study

Grupo Bimbo

Influencer-Led Tapas Activation

To extend the impact of its Tapas initiative and scale up engagement, Grupo Bimbo harnessed the power of interactive digital content and influencer partnerships. Rather than relying on traditional advertising, the company collaborated with culinary content creators, foodies, and chefs to make food waste messaging dynamic, visual, and shareable.

These creators brought the Tapas concept to life through video recipes, food truck pop-ups, social media challenges, and even collaborations with MasterChef Colombia, ensuring the idea resonated across digital platforms. Each activation focused on showing—not telling—consumers how

to creatively transform bread crusts into snacks or meals. The visual storytelling made it easy for consumers to follow along, replicate ideas at home, and join a growing community of “Tapas makers.”

The campaign achieved wide reach across Latin America, connecting with over 26 million people, generating 100 million impressions, and maintaining a strong 9% engagement rate—all on a modest budget. By embedding food waste reduction into entertainment, social sharing, and hands-on experiences, Grupo Bimbo built a strong digital ecosystem around Tapas, showing that interactive content can play a vital role in shifting behavior.



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Instead of just telling people what to do, we had people they trust—chefs, influencers—show them how to use crusts in a fun and tasty way.



Natalia Carrillo Aguirre, Colombia
Marketing Manager,
Grupo Bimbo

Foster Collaboration and Partnerships

6

Collaborate with industry partners, NGOs, and government agencies to amplify impact and create a collective effort against food waste.



Case Study

Kerry Group

Food Rescue and Redistribution

Kerry Group partnered with Too Good To Go and Wageningen University to expand the reach of their *Food Waste Estimator*, a free and interactive tool designed to show the environmental and economic impact of food waste. Originally created for B2B clients, the tool was adapted for consumers—illustrating how small changes in behavior could lead to big savings and environmental benefits, such as charging a smartphone 170,000 times or taking 500,000 minutes of hot showers.

By anchoring the conversation in tangible, household habits, the tool makes food waste reduction relatable and actionable. Kerry also conducted in-depth consumer

research—through surveys and video diaries across multiple countries—to identify regional behaviors and consumer personas. These insights help brands and manufacturers better target messaging and reduce waste by aligning with what matters most to their audience.

The collaboration with Too Good To Go provided additional tips on smart food use, from understanding date labels to embracing “ugly” produce. By offering the tool freely and without data capture, Kerry demonstrated a commitment to collective impact over commercial gain—reinforcing the value of accessible, consumer-centric solutions in tackling food waste at scale.

KERRY

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Food waste reduction helps with sustainability, helps feed the world. But sometimes that feels vague when you’re fighting for margins and share of brand in an inflationary environment. Whether we’re talking to consumers or the industry, we’re really trying to speak their language — to make it tangible.



Bert De Vegt,
VP and Pillar Executive,
Food Protection
& Preservation

Conclusion

Tackling household food waste is one of the most tangible ways our industry can drive impact—both for people and the planet.

As these examples have shown, companies across the globe are already stepping up: simplifying date labels, reframing leftovers, engaging consumers through digital content, and embedding food-saving messages into daily routines.

But lasting change doesn't happen in isolation. It happens when businesses share insights, align on messaging, and collaborate toward a common goal. That's where the CGF Food Waste Coalition of Action comes in. As a platform for collective learning and action, the Coalition empowers members to amplify what works—faster and at scale. By being part of this movement, companies gain access to shared tools, real-time case studies, and a powerful peer network that accelerates both innovation and impact.

Reducing food waste at the consumer level is a challenge—but also a tremendous opportunity. When we communicate clearly, positively, and locally, we not only help households waste less food—we help them see the value in every bite. Together, let's continue to inspire action, raise ambition, and deliver on SDG 12.3.

**Join us. Share your story.
Be part of the solution.**



About the Food Waste Coalition

Leading a Global Commitment to Halve Food Loss and Waste by 2030

When our Coalition was launched in 2020, its members set out to achieve an ambitious yet practical strategy that will have real, lasting impacts on our global food systems and ensure more food makes it from producers, to grocery stores and finally on to consumers' tables. Thanks to its CEO leadership, our Coalition is able to drive swift action to address the important issue of Food Loss and Waste (FLW) within the industry.

The Food Waste Coalition is already working to reduce waste by focusing on four priority actions:

- 1. Measurement and Reporting:** Public reporting drives internal action and builds consumer trust. The Coalition partnered with WRAP to [create a baseline report](#) to track progress in halving food waste in its operations from 2021 to 2030.

- 2. Scaling up the 10x20x30 Initiative:** The Coalition collaborates with Champions 12.3 to meet UN SDG 12.3 through the 10x20x30 Initiative, which mobilizes the entire supply chain to reduce food loss and waste.
- 3. Upstream Losses:** Approximately 30% of food loss happens post-harvest, but more data is needed. The Coalition and WWF are working with growers and buyers to measure post-harvest losses and improve system efficiency.
- 4. Consumer Engagement:** Around 60% of food waste occurs in homes. The Coalition's #TooGoodToWaste campaign educates consumers and partners with retailers to reduce household food waste. In 2024, the [Sustainable Kitchen online hub](#) was launched to inspire corporate-level campaigns that promote reducing waste and healthier eating.

We invite CGF members and interested stakeholders to see how they can get involved in the Food Waste Coalition and help support our work to drive positive change.

About The Consumer Goods Forum

The Consumer Goods Forum ("CGF") is a global, parity-based industry network that is driven by its members to encourage the global adoption of practices and standards that serves the consumer goods industry worldwide.

It brings together the CEOs and senior management of some 400 retailers, manufacturers, service providers, and other stakeholders across 70 countries, and it reflects the diversity of the industry in geography, size, product category and format. Its member companies have combined sales of EUR 4.6 trillion and directly employ nearly 10 million people, with a further 90 million related jobs estimated along the value chain. It is governed by its Board of Directors, which comprises more than 55 manufacturer and retailer CEOs.

For more information, please visit: www.theconsumergoodsforum.com

