

Food Wastage

Why in news?

The menace of hunger or undernourishment can be mitigated to a considerable extent by curtailing the wastage of raw food and making a better use of the left-over cooked food.

What is the picture of food wastage?

Global picture

- **UNEP Data** - The UNEP index assesses the food lost between harvest and consumption at around 17% of production.
- **FAO Data** - The UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has quantified the overall losses at 1.3 billion tonnes a year.

Indian Scenario

- **Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) Data** - One-third of all food in India is spoiled or wasted before it is consumed.
- **UNEP Report** - The Food Waste Index Report 2021 of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) had estimated household food wastage in India at around 50 kg per capita per year.

What are the major causes of food wastage?

- **Causes of food wastage** - A sizeable amount of food is discarded because of the tendency to buy/ cook more food than can be consumed by the individuals at social events.
- Paucity of refrigeration and cold-storage facilities is also responsible for food spoilage.
- A significant quantity of food (17 %of production) is lost between harvest and consumption.
- The wastage also include losses at supply chain — transportation, storage, and marketing.
- **Need for preventing food wastage** - The prevention of food wastage can help feed 1.26 billion hungry people every year.
- The menace of hunger or undernourishment can be mitigated to a certain extent by curtailing the wastage of raw food and making a better use of the left-over cooked food.



What efforts were taken in this regard globally?

- **Section 12.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)** has envisaged halving

the per-capita global food wastage by 2030 by improving supply chains and cutting down food losses at retail and consumer levels.

- **France** has enacted legislation requiring supermarkets to either give unsold food to charity or pass it on to farmers for use as animal feed or fertiliser.

What about the efforts taken by India?

- **IFSA - Indian Food Sharing Alliance (IFSA)** by the FSSAI, seeks to develop a network of food-collection agencies.
- It aims to bring together citizens, food businesses, corporate houses, civil society organisations, volunteers and local bodies to minimise food wastage all across the supply chain
- **Awareness** - Union government has been counselling to states to include a chapter on “Prevention of Food Wastage” in school textbooks to make the children and the youth aware about the need to save food.
- **Policy paper of NAAS** - A policy paper brought out by the National Academy of Agricultural Sciences (NAAS) has made a request for using discarded food as animal feed or converting it into manure.

References

1. [Business Standard | Sinful waste that needs to be stopped](#)
2. [Times of India | Food Waste Index Report 2021](#)

