

## Stable Food Waste Figures in Dutch Supermarkets, Focus Shifts to Further Innovation

**Veghel, July 21, 2025 - For the first time, food waste levels in Dutch supermarkets have plateaued. Compared to the initial measurement in 2018, waste is still down by 33%, meaning retail is still the sector with the most significant reduction in food waste.**

These results come from the annual research initiated by the foundation *Samen Tegen Voedselverspilling* (Food Waste Free United) and the Dutch Food Retail Association (CBL), funded by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security, and Nature (LVVN). The study was carried out by Wageningen University & Research (WUR) based on self-reported data from supermarkets.

### Still Work to Be Done

The stagnation in this year's reduction is partly due to improved data quality. The data is now more precise, resulting in better insights. While bread waste has declined further, meat waste increased slightly compared to 2023. In total, food waste amounted to 0.92% of purchased volume in 2024, up from 0.89% in 2023. The figures suggest that most of the "low-hanging fruit" has already been picked. Toine Timmermans, director of *Samen Tegen Voedselverspilling*, explains: "Supermarkets have worked hard to reduce food waste through strategies like dynamic markdowns close to expiry dates, offering day-old bread, smarter ordering, and extending the shelf life of fresh products. This has led to impressive results year after year. But this year's findings show it's becoming more challenging. The relatively easy steps have been taken, now we need to find more complex and innovative solutions to continue making impact."

### Meat Waste Has the Greatest Impact

Meat waste rose slightly compared to 2023. However, last year saw an exceptionally sharp decline, so the current figures follow a more logical trend since 2018. CBL director Marc Jansen says: "We are pleased that supermarket food waste remains well below 1%. We want to treat food with care. Since meat production has a relatively high environmental footprint, it's especially wasteful when meat is lost. That's why supermarkets pay close attention to meat purchasing and inventory management. We hope and expect to see that reflected positively in next year's figures."

### Joint Efforts to Reduce Bread Waste

For years supermarkets have focused on better selling out of bread, resulting in a 16% decrease in bread waste compared to 2023, an encouraging development. However, despite this significant reduction, bread remains the category with the highest absolute losses. About one-third of supermarket food waste comes from the bakery section, making it the area with the most potential gains (in kilos). Timmermans sees an opportunity here for further reduction: "But how can we achieve that? Retailers will need to make solid agreements; among themselves and with their bread suppliers. We must work together to find more sustainable and waste-free solutions."

### Online Grocery Retail

Eleven companies participated in the monitor: Albert Heijn, Aldi, Dekamarkt, Dirk, Hoogvliet (new), Jumbo, Lidl, Plus, online supermarkets Picnic and Crisp (new), and meal box provider HelloFresh. Together, these retailers represent about 90% of the market.

Thanks to the participation of online players Picnic, Crisp, and HelloFresh, along with the online figures from one of the regular supermarkets, the research now provides a clear picture of food waste in online retail. The waste figures in the online segment are significantly lower.

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### Editor's note:

#### About Food Waste Free United

[Food Waste Free United](#) constitutes the definitive movement that brings together and accelerates all major initiatives and expertise for a waste-free Netherlands. Companies from the entire chain, governments and social organisations are working together towards United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 12.3 to reduce food loss and waste by half by 2030 compared to 2015. Organisations supporting the foundation are: Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature, Province of North Brabant, the Netherlands Nutrition Centre, Wageningen University & Research and the municipality of Meierijstad.