

Food Waste Free Week 2025 Officially Opened by Queen Máxima

Veghel, 8 September 2025 – With the unveiling of the campaign image, Her Majesty Queen Máxima gave the official starting signal: Food Waste Free Week 2025 has begun. During the opening, young consumers as well as professionals demonstrated how they are committed to combating food waste. Special attention was given to this edition's theme: shelf life.

Following the official opening, members of the Shelf Life Coalition took the stage. This coalition aims to clarify expiration dates on food products on a large scale. The founding organizations Albert Heijn, FrieslandCampina, and Unilever explained, on behalf of the 18 coalition partners, why this is so important. Queen Máxima was then invited to explore various solutions to reduce food waste.

Waste-Free Heroes Speak Out

At home, food is still often thrown away unnoticed, meaning there is much to be gained. Queen Máxima was presented with several examples of tips and tools that consumers can use, such as the "Eetmaatje" (portion measure tool) and the Use It Up- tape. Children from primary school Maria ter Heide participated in a "Look-Smell-Taste" activity focused on expiration dates, in which Queen Máxima enthusiastically took part. The children shared what they had learned about expiration dates and explanatory icons. Their involvement showed that awareness about food can start at a young age. In the hospitality sector, reducing food waste already begins during training. Each year during Food Waste Free Week, the Brabant Master Chef- competition is organized by partner Koning Willem I College. In this competition, waste reduction is a key theme. Student chefs demonstrated how they reduce waste through smart techniques and creative use of ingredients. The young chefs served delicious bites on the spot, prepared without wasting any leftovers.

Next, four companies presented their innovations to help reduce food waste among businesses and consumers: OneThird with the avocado scanner, Keep-it with flexible expiration dates, Combilo with shelf-stable semi-finished products from residual flows, and Orbisk with their smart waste monitor for professional kitchens.

Finally, Queen Máxima was introduced to Social Food, a new initiative by Food Waste Free United and Food Banks Netherlands. This initiative tackles food waste while also contributing to food security. By processing food surplus streams into shelf-stable products, food banks can rely on a structural source of food for their members.

Activities During Food Waste Free Week

Food Waste Free United and the Netherlands Nutrition Centre are mobilizing around 150 organizations to take action against food waste. Throughout the week, there is attention for practical tips and tools and how to deal with expiration dates. Supermarkets across the Netherlands inspire and encourage their customers to waste less food. Food producers are also giving significant attention to the topic, as are national catering companies at hundreds of locations. A reminder to eat the entire loaf appears on 8 million loaves of bread, the most wasted product. Various municipalities are organizing local events and campaigns, ranging from workshops and theatre performances to waste-free dinners and awareness campaigns in public transport. The education sector is also taking action again, from primary schools to universities. From 8 to 14 September, people in the Netherlands are encouraged not to throw away any food for an entire week.

Note to editors:

The foundation Food Waste Free United forms the movement in which all key initiatives and expertise for a waste-free Netherlands come together and are accelerated. Companies from across the entire supply chain, knowledge institutions, governments, and social organizations collaborate on United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 12.3 to halve food loss and waste by 2030 compared to 2015. Supporting organizations of the foundation include: the Ministry of LNV, the Province of North Brabant, the Netherlands Nutrition Centre, Wageningen University & Research, and the Municipality of Meierijstad. The efforts of Food Waste Free United and the Netherlands Nutrition Centre to clarify expiration dates are funded by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature and the European Union.