

Twelfth International Conference on Culinary Arts and Sciences

Editors :

M. Michaud

A. Giboreau

A. Perez-Cueto

**The Worshipful Company of Cooks
&
The Institut Paul Bocuse Research Center**



MENU, FOOD & HOSPITALITY MAGAZINE

MENU

VOLUME 10 - SPECIAL ISSUE

REPORT OF ICCAS PROCEEDINGS

**Twelfth International Conference
on Culinary Arts and Sciences**

TWELFTH ICCAS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CULINARY ARTS AND SCIENCES

Lyon, 2 – 3 June, 2022

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Characterization of behaviors and practices related to household food waste in Portugal

Isabela Freitas¹, Ada Rocha¹, Margarida Liz Martins²

¹Faculty of Nutrition and Food Sciences of Porto University, Porto, Portugal. ²University of Trás-os-Montes and Alto Douro, Vila Real, Portugal

This research was supported by national funds through FCT - Foundation for Science and Technology within the scope of UIDB/05748/2020 and UIDP/05748/2020.

Introduction

The Food Waste Index Report 2021 estimates that about 570 million tons of wasted food occur in the households. The characterization of food waste in the households will enable the development of strategies focused on raising consumer awareness and reducing food waste.

Objective

Characterize the behaviors and practices related to food waste in a sample of households in Portugal.

Method & design

Data were collected by an online survey available between April 1 and 31, 2021 responded by 637 individuals, representing 637 families. Data collection tools included questions about habits and behaviors related to the acquisition, storage and preservation of food and the preparation of meals, self-reported food waste and sociodemographic data.

Results

The most wasted foods by the participants were fruits, vegetables and leftovers. The estimated average amount of food waste over a one-week period was about 370 g per family. The main determinant for food waste was food deterioration. Most participants reported that leftovers are planned and used in subsequent meals. The influence of sociodemographic characteristics on food waste and sociodemographic characteristics were not relevant, being significant in families with children, who showed high waste for fish ($p=0,038$), pulses ($p=0,021$) and pasta/rice ($p=0,023$) and for age, with less waste of dairy products ($R=-0,079$; $p=0,045$), and high waste of potatoes ($R=0,110$; $p=0,005$) for older consumers. Habits and behaviors related to food acquisition and meal preparation proved to be the most significant factors in preventing food waste.

Conclusions

Fruits, vegetables and leftovers were identified as the most frequently food wasted by households. Good practices carried out by families related to purchase of food, storage and conservation, meal preparation and leftover management, influenced the prevention of food waste, demonstrating that is already an awareness of the issue of food waste among the participants.