

Primary production food loss: a currently blind spot in EU food policy



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THE PROBLEM

Each year, a substantial amount of **(pre-harvest) food loss (FL)** is generated at the primary production stage, caused by, among others, adverse weather conditions, inadequate product handling or non-harvesting due to low market prices. **FL contributes to food insecurity, natural resource depletion, greenhouse gas emissions and pressure on land and water.** However, while activities to prevent (post-harvest) food waste, have recently gained traction in the European Union, **policies impacting FL are fragmented across different fields and there is no harmonized definition or reporting framework.**

THE FOLOU APPROACH AND SOLUTIONS

The EU Horizon Europe project FOLOU aims to **increase knowledge and consensus on FL** by developing:

A FL definition

Most relevant FL drivers (Interviews)

Climate change	65%
Pests and diseases	45%
Marketing standards	35%
Poor production forecasts	25%

An **assessment of food loss drivers**, validated in focus group interviews with food supply chain actors

A harmonized **methodology** to measure and quantify FL, standardized in a **CEN workshop agreement** and developed in parallel with **ISO/TS 20008**

A **FL registry and sustainability tool** allowing public authorities and food supply chain actors to monitor FL and assess its economic, social and ecological impacts

6 validated agricultural technological innovations (e.g. drones, satellites, blockchain) to quantify and prevent FL

An **online learning center** on FL topics

A **twinning region programme** supporting eight early adopters of FOLOU tools and methodologies

5 best practice guidelines for stakeholders along the food supply chain and **2 policy briefs**

- Primary producers
- Policy makers
- Retailers
- Consumers
- Researchers

CONCLUSIONS

Together, these tools can make a significant contribution to measuring the magnitude, identifying the root causes and reducing FL, thus mitigating its concomitant impacts. FL reduction is an opportunity for both improvement in the agricultural productive sector and enhancement of sustainability in European countries.



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