

Food Loss in Ireland

Drivers

Part of the FOLOU activities is the identification and mapping of the main drivers for food loss generation¹. These are categorised into the following categories:

- A. Behavioural: Human or individual factors in place within the farm boundaries, which can be categorised as the presence or absence of motivations, perceptions and beliefs, knowledge, skills and abilities that lead agricultural operators to cause food losses (e.g. harvesting techniques, knowledge).
- B. Societal: Factors that come from external human sources of socio-cultural, economic, technical, political and regulatory nature and that influence or condition the behaviour and decisions of farm operators. These factors are beyond the direct control of people and can influence food losses (e.g. market price, standards & regulations, coordination & cooperation, supply chain capacity, overproduction).
- C. Environmental: Environmental factors that have a consequence on food losses generation (e.g. climate and weather conditions, pests and diseases).

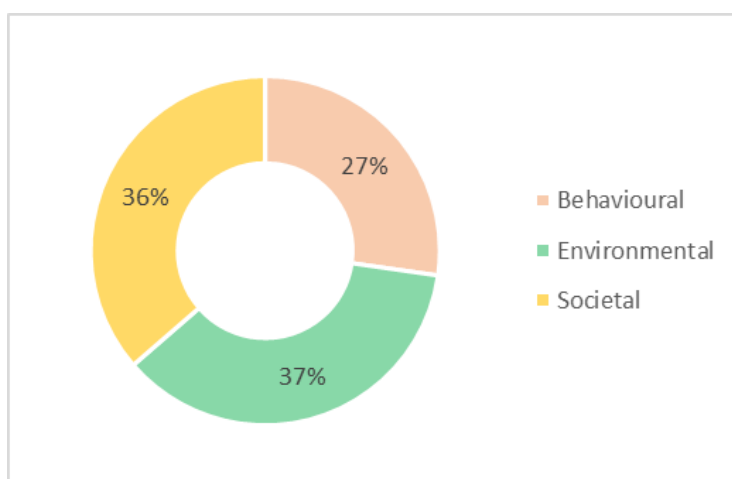


Figure 5: Distribution of the three driver categories for the identified barriers in Ireland

¹ As is produced in the Deliverable 2.1: https://www.folou.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/D2.1_Standard_protocol_vF.pdf



The following Table lists the number of reasons driving food loss in Ireland under the sources that were identified by the FOLU project. More information can be found in the Deliverable 2.2².

Table 6: Food Loss drivers in Ireland per commodity and driver category

Commodity Category	Driver	Driver Category
Fish and Fisheries Products	Loss due to discarding, Loss due to escapees	Environmental
	Loss due to disease/infection/illness including gill disease, pancreatic disease, algal blooms and endoparasites, exacerbated by jellyfish, sea lice, environmental conditions	
	Loss due to handling and grading (adults) / Loss due to: Clawed: de-clawing and discarding of body meat/use as bait	Behavioural
	Loss due to quality standards including fouling, shell breakages, undersized	Societal
Fruits and Vegetables	Loss due to Disease (particularly mould and mildew), nutritional deficiencies (e.g. boron deficiency), weed control, Bacterial breakdown due to wet weather at harvesting / Loss due to Insects	Environmental
	Loss due to: Unplanned production due to shifts in weather (e.g. crops harvested earlier due to earlier than expected warm weather or storms) / Loss due to: Weather (snow, extreme wind, drought, waterlogging) / Loss due to natural weather conditions	
	Loss due to: Unsaleable fruit (damaged, overripe) / Loss due to change in demand, e.g. due to a wintry summer week / Loss due to: Variable demand and availability / Loss due to: Supermarkets cancel orders at the last minute / Loss due to: Not meeting customer specifications, misshapen	Societal
	Loss due to Small or unripe fruit / Loss due to fallen fruits	Behavioural
Meats and Dairy Products	Loss due to mastitis, Respiratory and gastrointestinal infections, Pests, liver fluke	Environmental
	Loss due to Birthing problems	
	Loss due to injuries	
	Loss due to bruising, residues, export spec failures, quality issues	Behavioural
	Inadequate or improper handling of the product	
Cereals and Pulses	Offal oversupply, market limits / Specification mismatches	Societal
	Loss due to Necking or brackling (yield too high)	Behavioural

² https://www.folou.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/D2.2_ReportreviewFLdrivers_VF.pdf



	Loss due to Fallen crops from poorly applied nitrogen-containing fertiliser (machine setting errors)	
	Loss due to respiration	
	Excess production to ensure fulfilment of contracts	Societal
Roots, Tubers and Oil Crops	Loss due to Shelling before harvest	Behavioural
	Loss due to respiration / Store losses due to moisture losses / Diseases during drying, curing and storage	
	Harvesting losses – too deep or fall out of the harvester / Mechanical damage	
	Loss due to: Diseases including gangrene, pink rot, soft rot, dry rot, cavity spot, Fusarium, Sclerotinia / Canker	Environmental
	Loss due to: Extreme weather (frost, flooding)	Societal
	Deformities (forking and fanging) / Damaged and outside supermarket specification requirements	