



Cosus

Consumers are directly and indirectly responsible for wasting a lot of food, which could for a large part be avoided if they were willing to accept suboptimal food (SOF) that deviates in sensory characteristics (odd shapes, discolourations) or has a best-before date that is approaching or has passed, but is still perfectly fine to eat. The choice to accept or discard SOF is taken both before and after purchase (in store and in household). Our aim is to increase consumer acceptance of SOF, before and after purchase, by implementing targeted strategies that are based on consumer insights and are feasible for and acceptable by the food sector (Call topic 3).

The project is divided into eight work packages (WP) that combine different quantitative and qualitative approaches. These approaches will be undertaken by competent partners from Germany, the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden and Norway in three phases. The first phase (WP 1-3) analyses the issue through a literature review and a transnational analysis of consumer motives, attitudes, habits and behaviour, and the structure and functioning of the food supply chain regarding consumer-related food waste and the success of previous food waste reducing initiatives. The second phase (WP 4-7) consists of experiments that investigate the effects of consumer attention to communication related to SOF, sensory perceptions and household social interactions, on consumer acceptance of and willingness to pay for SOF. Barriers to and opportunities toward an improved handling of SOF in the supply chain will also be investigated. Finally, the third phase (WP 8) will develop and test strategies for effectively encouraging purchase and consumption of SOF in household and in-store intervention studies. The project will provide validated strategies to promote the distribution and consumption of suboptimal food products, therewith improving resource efficiency in the food supply chain and contributing to a more sustainable food provision..