

Economic impact of food waste in a school centre

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The recent world food crisis, resulting from the euro zone financial crisis threatens the access of the small producers to the land, as well as food production and wealth generation strongly affecting families food security. Wealth is not uniformly distributed and a great part of the population remains in poverty situations and food insecurity. Children spend most of the time at schools and therefore it is in those places that they consume most of their daily meals. It is then of high importance to control the quality of food served and consumed namely by quantifying food waste at school canteen.

The aim of this study was to evaluate the economic impact of food waste from school meals in a school in the centre in the north of the country.

The work was carried out at school centre during 6 days and included 1684 meals. The produced food, leftovers and plate waste were measured. *Per capita* consumption, the cost of waste and the number of people who could be feed with the value corresponding to waste were calculated.

The results showed that were wasted 29% of the produced food, and that bread was the meal component more wasted. The average cost of the total waste was around 35€ per day and would be enough to feed 119 people.

The performance of the food service evaluated taking into account the waste feed is awful and produces unnecessary costs, so it is essential to define strategies to reduce food waste, such as staff training and awareness among users of the organization.