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Unmistakeable Signal from Rome: Food Losses increasingly Higher on the Agenda for International Players

The SAVE FOOD Initiative presents itself at the Permanent Representation of Germany to the United Nations marking the Day of German Unity

Düsseldorf, 2/10/2013 – Today's reception of the German Embassy at the UN's Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) to mark the Day of German Unity focuses on the theme of food waste. The SAVE FOOD Initiative is using this event to introduce its agenda. Every year one third of all foodstuffs produced is disposed of or wasted. In Germany alone this adds up to some 11 million tons or 81.6 kg per German citizen. At the same time, to the tune of 842 million people are suffering from hunger worldwide, which could be remedied by a fraction of the unused food.

SAVE FOOD is a joint initiative of Messe Düsseldorf and FAO, which has also been supported by the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) since early 2013. It aims to provide concrete solutions for reducing international food losses and waste by harnessing the strengths and expertise of its members from industry and public organisations. This approach includes the entire food value chain from production and logistics to retail and consumers. Being the international No. 1 trade fair for the packaging sector and associated process industries, the interpack trade fair of Messe Düsseldorf' plays a leading role here. Messe Düsseldorf's special contribution is the expertise of its international contacts in industry and associations.

Also stressing the need to act and the urgency of the food loss and waste issue is the German Ambassador to the FAO and the United Nations in Rome, Thomas Wrießnig: "Reducing the amount of perished and thrown-away food concerns all of us – consumers as much as producers, processors and dealers. From the global food supply perspective these losses are unbearable and also mean an unacceptable waste of natural resources." The Ambassador thanked Messe Düsseldorf for its initiative and support of the event organised by the Permanent Representation on the Day of the German Unity.

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An initiative of Messe Düsseldorf
in collaboration with the
Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations (FAO).





Every year on the occasion of the Day of German Unity the Permanent Representation of Germany to the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations, FAO, and the international organisations in Rome, addresses one focal theme related to global food supply. Under the heading “less waste, more food” the international political decision-makers from the circle of Permanent Representations as well as of the international organisations were this time invited to form their opinion on the impact of global food waste and the work of the SAVE FOOD Initiative.

Networking of Actors Decisive

Referring to the importance of networking in the combat against food losses and waste Daniel Gustafson, Deputy Director General of Operations at FAO, said: “No single organization can win the fight against food loss and waste alone. The only way that FAO can make progress is in collaboration with others. The role of industry and the packaging industry is important. It is difficult for FAO to work with individual industries and companies, but to come together in the Save Food initiative is a perfect entry point.” To ensure optimal cooperation within the SAVE FOOD framework the FAO has established a cross-divisional body for food waste.

Industry contributes Practical Know-how from Business

“Packaging can substantially contribute to cutting food waste,” underscores Stefan Glimm, General Manager of European Aluminium Foil Association and Flexible Packaging Europe, a SAVE FOOD member of the first hour, and goes on to explain: “It protects far more resources than those required for its production. Longer shelf life obtained also without cold chains through optimum packaging is just one case in point.”

On Third of All Foodstuffs are Lost

While less developed countries suffer losses of up to 40% of all foods because they perish before they reach consumers, western industrialised nations such as Germany predominantly experience food waste. Here up to 30% of all food is disposed of unused. For individual groups of foodstuffs the FAO figures are particularly worrying: some 45% of the annual fruit and vegetable production is affected by food loss and waste. A particularly serious loss of resources: the 263 million tons of meat that are disposed of rather than consumed. These account for one fifth of global production. The extent of food loss and waste make the necessity to act blatantly clear: just one fourth of the food currently lost worldwide would suffice to feed 870 million hungry people – and hence the complete part of the global population suffering from hunger.

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About SAVE FOOD:

The SAVE FOOD Initiative is a cooperation between the World Food & Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations, FAO, and Messe Düsseldorf GmbH to combat global food losses and waste. Since early 2013 the initiative has also been supported by the United Nations Environmental Programme, UNEP. SAVE FOOD aims to establish a network of business, politicians and researchers, stimulate dialogue and help to work out solutions along the food value chain. The aim is also to initiate and promote own SAVE FOOD projects with the support of the industry. SAVE FOOD started in May 2011 with an international congress and an exhibition as part of the world's leading trade fair for the packaging sector and its associated process industries, interpack. interpack 2014 on 7 and 8 May will again see experts from business, political and research circles meet in Düsseldorf to discuss the theme of food waste and losses. For more information go to www.save-food.org.

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