“Highlights from date marking activities in Norway”

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Highlights from research

Food waste and causes in Norway (ForMat)

- Total food waste per capita: 68.04 kilo. 14% reduction since 2010.
- Consumer stands for 2/3 or 42.6 kilo pr capita.
- Leftovers from meals, fruit & veg and fresh baked goods are the largest waste categories amongst consumers.
- 42% of food is discarded because it has passed its expiry date.
- Use of dynamic durability – longer shelf life during winter.

Food waste and date labelling (Nordic Council of Ministers)

- Need for better guidelines for the food industry, retail and consumers:
  - Better understanding of the difference between “BF” and “UB” – tend to discard food when expiry date has passed
  - Better understanding of durability after package opening
  - “Use by” should only be used on highly perishable food
- Packaging gas (60% CO2/40% N2) gives longer shelf – from 10 to 18 days for minced meat - 50% less food waste in retail
- Harmonization for lower storage temperature - varies between 8 to 4 degrees across the Nordic Countries
- Shelf life for eggs should be regulated like any other food where producer is responsible for date marking.

Date marking on the agenda in Norway

- Long term agreement between the authorities and the whole food chain to reduce the food waste in Norway with 50% by 2030
- Equal methods for measuring and reporting food waste
- Private and public initiatives across the value chain, including consumers

One important joint initiative in the agreement is:

**Development of labelling guidance**
- Best practice on food date labelling and storage advice
  (similar to Wrap guidance)

We will reduce the food waste with 50% – collaboration between businesses and authorities is the key to success.

Vidar Helgesen, Minister of Climate and Environment

https://www.regjeringen.no/no/aktuelt/avtale-om-a-redusere-matsvinn/id2558931/
The shift from «Use by» to «Best before» on fresh products reduce food waste

- All dairy products
- Some meat products;
  - Bacon
  - Whole pieces
  - Cured meats
  - Liverpaste
- Dynamic date labelling used for milk (longer shelf life wintertime)
Packaging innovation contribute to longer shelf life and reduced food waste

- Use of different technology to increase shelf life:
  - MAP (modified atmosphere packaging)
    - Longer shelf life for liverpaste
  - Change in packaging gas (C02/N2)
    - 50% less food waste specific for minced meat*
  - CO2 emitters;
    - Increased shelf life with 4 days for raw salmon filet**
  - Shelf life indicators;
    - monitors temperature overtime and indicate the actual remaining shelf life of a product

**https://nofima.no/en/nyhet/2016/03/better-salmon-fillet-with-carbon-dioxide-co2/
Additional date marking – new initiative

«BEST BEFORE… – OFTEN GOOD AFTER»

- Aligned for common additional marking across the food industry in Norway (February 2018)
- Objective is to increase consumers knowledge and to change consumers behaviour
- Additional marking is voluntary:
  - Only relevant for «best before» labelled products
  - Short and long life products
  - Should be used consistently to avoid consumer confusion
  - Should be followed by additional guidance;

«LOOK, SMELL, TASTE»
Food Authorities support the additional marking initiative under certain conditions

- Food producers responsible for date marking incl. additional marking
- Voluntary information such as additional date marking:
  - Should follow current legislation
  - Must be **consistent, explicit and not confusing** to the consumer
- Food sector need to be aligned and agree on a common standard

*Source: faktaartikkel Mattilsynet/https://www.mattilsynet.no/mat_og_vann/merking_av_mat/generelle_krav_til_merking_av_mat/om_supplerende_holdbarhetsmerking.28878*
Consumers welcome the additional marking initiative

- **Highlights from consumer surveys testing the additional date marking:**
  - **7 out of 10** consumers are more confident in using their senses and regard the food as edible after purchasing additional marked products.
  - Especially high awareness to the initiative among young people <30yrs
  - **9 out of 10** understand the purpose of the additional marking:
    - Milk can be consumed even if the date is expired
    - Regard the information as additional guidance
    - Use their own senses to consider the quality of the product to a larger extent

*Source: NorgesGruppen / Q-Meieriene*
New opportunities for sales and distribution for food close to expiry date

Digital discount

Wholesaler – surplus food

Outlet surplus food

Sell, don’t throw away

Food bank

Food bank

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Summary

- Date marking is important to prevent food waste – both food sector and consumers need more guidance.

- Improving practice for date marking is still the most important factor:
  - Consistent use of «use by» and «best before»
  - Strive to accomplish same placement for type of date marking and date if possible
  - «Use by» should only be applied on highly perishable food
  - Consider new technology in order to maximize shelf life
  - Use dynamic date marking where relevant

- Available research shows that additional date marking contributes to positive change in consumer behavior.

- The introduction of an additional symbol: «Look, smell, taste», will encourage the consumers to use their senses to a larger extent

- Food Authorities support the additional marking initiative under certain conditions; information must be consistent, explicit and not confusing to the consumer

- Food sector need to be aligned and agree on a common standard

- Consider consumer campaign to build awareness and knowledge about date marking