

# Food waste in SA – A CSIR perspective

Food Waste Industry-meets-Science workshop  
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**Prof Suzan Oelofse**  
**Research Group Leader: Waste for**  
**Development**  
**CSIR**



# Overview of current food waste activities

- Quantification of food waste
  - Estimations
    - Assumptions of % generation at each stage of value chain
    - Calculations based on MSW characterisation studies
  - Verification/update of the assumptions used for calculations
    - Characterisation studies
    - Literature reviews for updated assumptions
- Household behaviour
  - City of Tshwane interview survey of 5 suburbs (250 hh) – MSc Thesis
  - Gauteng – self administered questionnaires UP collaboration
- Cost of food waste along the value chain
- Estimating Environmental impacts of food waste – water loss
- Food services sector – restaurants in shopping malls – MSc Thesis

# Obstacles/Challenges facing food waste

- Lack of common definition of food waste
- Lack of data on food waste at all stages in the value chain
  - Quantities
  - Reasons for waste
  - Management options implemented – how much goes where?
- **Flawed assumptions in estimations of waste generation**
  - Indications are that SA consumers waste more than the average sub-Saharan Africa consumer – ongoing research
  - Postharvest losses are likely to be less than rest of sub-Saharan Africa
  - Informal sector farmers and trade not yet included in estimates
  - Food security research focus on increased production and alternative food sources rather than increased efficiency in supply and consumption
- Perceived legal constraints to minimising food waste
- Lack of national strategy to address food waste

# Opportunities for reducing food waste

- Increased efficiency in food value chains
- Enhancing competitiveness of agro-processing sector
- Raising awareness of food waste throughout the value chain
- Interventions to influence of consumer demand, quality standards, market prices, practices relating to 'best-before' and 'use-by' dates, etc. on pre-and post-consumer food waste
- National government intervention
  - Policy and/or regulations
- Realising the resource potential of waste through beneficiation
- Investigate potential economic incentives to reduce food waste
- Establish a data bank of evidence to track food waste reduction

# Current gaps in knowledge

- Impact of small scale farming on food waste throughout the value chain
- Contribution of informal trade to food waste
- A lack of understanding of the drivers of food waste throughout the value chain
- Lack of understanding of the impacts (positive and negative) of packaging choice on food waste
- Lack of evidence to support policy development

# Thank You

E-mail: [soelofse@csir.co.za](mailto:soelofse@csir.co.za)

Tel: 012 841 4333

[www.csir.co.za](http://www.csir.co.za)

