

# JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

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**JOINT NEA AND AVA NEWS RELEASE**

## **SAVING MONEY THE BIGGEST MOTIVATION FOR HOUSEHOLDS TO REDUCE FOOD WASTAGE: NEA & AVA SURVEY**

*Survey findings to support NEA's outreach efforts to encourage all to reduce food waste at source*

**Singapore, 20 November 2015** – A survey commissioned by the National Environment Agency (NEA) and Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority of Singapore (AVA) has revealed that saving money is the biggest motivation that will drive Singapore consumers to reduce food wastage, while concern for the environment came a close second.

2 The survey was commissioned in September 2014 to better understand the main reasons behind food wastage in households and identify triggers for change. After the survey was conducted, a focus group discussion was also carried out in July 2015, to gain further insights into the underlying perceptions, attitudes and habits of Singapore consumers with regard to food wastage.

### **Survey and focus group discussion findings**

3 The survey, which collated responses from 1,016 participants, revealed that encouragingly, eight out of 10 Singapore consumers feel bothered when uneaten food is thrown away. Most respondents said that they avoid wasting food if possible in their preparation of meals at home, eating out or catering of food.

4 However, while respondents were concerned about wasting food, they were generally unwilling to compromise on freshness and absence of defects on food. Expired food, mouldy food and food that looked, smelled or tasted bad were the top three reasons given for throwing food away (see **ANNEX A** for more details on survey results).

5 The focus group discussion revealed that consumers were more likely to waste food when eating at home compared to dining out, as they tend to buy more than what they eventually consumed. Many participants said that they tend to shop on impulse, such as buying food items on promotion, instead of being guided by checklists and meal plans. Among the survey respondents who indicated that they usually buy more than enough food when grocery shopping, the most common reason given for doing so was to ensure that household members had more than enough to eat.

6 Nevertheless, the survey found that helping the family save money was the most commonly cited motivation (eight in 10) respondents gave as a trigger of change to reduce food waste, and it is heartening to note that concern for the environment came in a close second (77 per cent). Six in 10 respondents also indicated that they would waste less food if they had better information on how to plan meals and store food adequately. Overall, the results showed that awareness of food wastage is high, but more can be done to motivate consumers to take action to reduce food wastage.

### **NEA to roll out food wastage reduction outreach programme**

7 Based on the findings, NEA will be launching a food wastage reduction programme to encourage the public to prevent and reduce food waste at source. The programme aims to encourage consumers to engage in smart food purchase, storage and preparation habits, to conserve valuable resources while saving on costs. Encouraging the reduction of food wastage is part of the plans under the Sustainable Singapore Blueprint's goal of Singapore becoming a Zero Waste Nation.

8 Starting from 23 November 2015, posters and educational videos on food wastage will be featured through channels such as digital and mobile media platforms; at bus-stop shelters; in newspapers and on TV (see **ANNEX B** for an example of the collateral materials). The posters and educational videos draw comparisons between the cost of food wastage and what the money could be otherwise spent on.

9 Everyone can play an active role and encourage his or her family to take action to reduce food wastage in their household. To raise awareness on this, customised educational materials will be produced for households containing information on how to reduce food wastage within the home and help families save money. The public can also access an online handy guide to reducing food wastage, available at [www.cgs.sg/FWRToolkit](http://www.cgs.sg/FWRToolkit), which provides a wide range of useful tips on how to reduce food wastage at home and when dining out. The handy guide provides suggestions on meal planning, food storage, as well as recipes and innovative ideas on how to use leftover food to create tasty dishes for the family.

10 In addition, NEA will be partnering various food retail businesses such as Cold Storage/Giant, PRIME, Sheng Siong, NTUC FairPrice and SUBWAY to raise greater awareness among consumers on how they can reduce food wastage. These companies have committed to displaying collateral materials, such as posters and table-top stickers, to remind and encourage consumers not to waste food. Businesses keen to come on board the programme can contact NEA through our hotline at 1800-CALL NEA (1800-2255 632).

11 NEA will also be working with Community Development Councils (CDCs), grassroots leaders, partners and stakeholders to undertake community-led initiatives related to reducing food wastage, such as the development of an educational skit and incorporating food waste reduction messages into community food distribution programmes.

12 From early next year, this programme will also be extended to schools to raise students' awareness and encourage them to play a part in reducing food wastage. Schools will be supported with a package that includes resources such as activity guides and exhibits from NEA.

13 The outreach effort is part of NEA's holistic food waste management strategy, which includes working with various stakeholders to develop good practice guides for food manufacturers, food retail establishments and supermarkets to minimise food waste across the food supply chain, as well as the promotion of food donation and redistribution.

14 Mr Ronnie Tay, Chief Executive Officer of NEA, said, "The amount of food waste generated in Singapore has seen a 1.5-fold increase in the past 10 years. While we work to reduce food waste disposed of through means such as food waste recycling and redistribution of unsold and excess food, the preferred approach remains that of preventing food wastage in the first place. We encourage everybody to buy only what he needs, or order only what he can finish, and help save the environment and resources by reducing food wastage."

15 As NEA drives the national effort to reduce food waste, we encourage all to make small lifestyle changes to incorporate the 3Rs of Reduce, Reuse and Recycle into other aspects of their lives. Members of the public are challenged to adopt "No Waste Days" where they pledge to reduce waste and benefit the environment. More information on how individuals, schools or organisations can participate in the "No Waste Days" Challenge can be found at [www.cgs.sg/nowastedays](http://www.cgs.sg/nowastedays).

16 For more 3R tips, the public can also visit NEA's 3R webpages at [www.nea.gov.sg/3r](http://www.nea.gov.sg/3r), or download the myENV mobile app.

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**About National Environment Agency**

Formed on 1 July 2002, the National Environment Agency (NEA) is the leading public organisation responsible for improving and sustaining a clean and green environment in Singapore. The NEA develops and spearheads environmental initiatives and programmes through its partnership with the People, Public and Private sectors. It is committed to motivating every individual to take up environmental ownership and to care for the environment as a way of life.

By protecting Singapore's resources from pollution, maintaining a high level of public health and providing timely meteorological information, the NEA endeavours to ensure sustainable development and a quality living environment for present and future generations.

**About Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority**

The Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority (AVA) is responsible for ensuring a resilient supply of safe food, safeguarding the health and welfare of animals, safeguarding the health of plants and facilitating agri-trade.

AVA is constantly on the lookout for new and potential food sources, through our push for source diversification in collaboration with the food industry. AVA works closely with the industry through various platforms like food business clusters, taskforces and dialogues. Simultaneously, AVA continues to help raise local agricultural productivity to enhance Singapore's food supply.

We have in place integrated food safety programmes which incorporate risk management, and leverage industry engagement and public outreach to ensure food safety as a shared responsibility.

AVA's comprehensive animal and plant health system prevents the introduction of exotic animal and plant diseases. AVA also takes steps to ensure compliance with animal health and welfare standards.

National Environment Agency & Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority

# Consumer Survey on Food Wastage

In September 2014, the National Environment Agency (NEA) and Agri-Food Veterinary Authority of Singapore (AVA) commissioned a survey to find out the consumer perceptions, behaviour and attitudes towards food wastage.

From January to July 2015, a survey and focus group discussion, sampling of over 1,000 respondents, were carried out.

## Cooking and Eating Habits



**26%**

purchase more than enough food for consumption



**70%**

said the reason was to ensure household members have more than enough to eat



**80%**

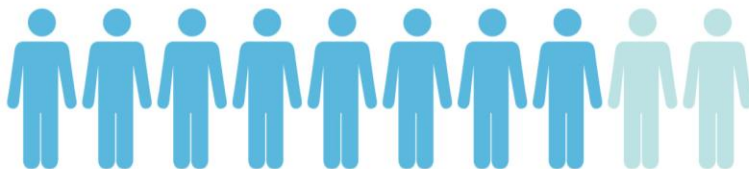
prepare food at home



**39%**

of those who prepare food at home have leftover food after a meal

## Attitudes Towards Food Wastage



**8 in 10 are bothered when uneaten food is thrown away.**

90% felt that it is a waste of money.

## Top Reason for Food Wastage in Households



BEST BEFORE  
dd/mm/yyyy

**Food gone out of date (63%)**

## Factors That Motivate Change



**81%**

think that they should reduce food wastage to save money



**77%**

think that they should reduce food waste because it is bad for the environment



**61%**

will waste less food if there is better info on how to plan and store food

Poster design

THE FOOD  
YOU  
THROW AWAY  
COULD PAY FOR  
A FUN FAMILY OUTING.

We generated 789 million kilograms of food waste in 2014.  
That's equivalent to everyone in Singapore throwing away  
2 bowls of food each day. By not buying, ordering and cooking too much,  
we could save enough money for a fun weekend with the family.



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Learn how to reduce  
food waste at [www.cgs.sg](http://www.cgs.sg)