

Feeding the 5000 event



“Feeding the 5000” events are based on the idea of “**Feeding bellies, not bins**” with food that would otherwise have been wasted. Therefore, **unsold foods** are collected from farmers, packers and wholesalers. Unharvest crops can also be collected through a “[Gleaning](#)” action, using volunteers to harvest from fields and orchards where crops are being left to rot, and a **meal** gets prepared from it **that feeds 5000 people**. The whole idea was born in 2009 in London, where [Tristram Stuart](#) organised the first “Feeding the 5000” event held on Trafalgar Square. “Feeding the 5000” is now not only the name of these events that have already been held all over the world, but more specifically of a concrete campaign aiming at “empowering and inspiring the global community to enact positive solutions to the global issue of food waste.” (feeding5k.org/about). “Feeding the 5000” events have been very successful in the past, both in terms of actual amount of food waste prevented as from a communication perspective. Because the events are usually held on a main square in the middle of big cities, they attract a lot of attention not only from participants, but also from by-passers, media, and politicians. The events have thus proved to be successful communication actions on the topic of food waste. In addition to organising the event, volunteers learn about food waste and are provided with tips on how to reduce food waste at home.

Putting on an event of this scale requires the involvement of hundreds of volunteers and several partner organizations and charities. You can of course also hold an event based on the same idea but of smaller scale, “**Feeding the 500**” or “**Feeding the 100**”, for example. Please note that “Feeding the 5000” events cannot be used to promote private enterprises, so no branding or corporate sponsorship is allowed. Please get in touch with the [Feeding the 5000 team](#) to see how they can support the event, help build partnerships, etc.

There are also other types of events that are based on the same idea, such as the “[Disco Soupe](#)” events.

Objectives

- ▶ Raise awareness amongst participants on how much food is wasted due to overproduction and strict cosmetic standards
- ▶ Make European citizens aware that actions to reduce food waste can be taken on a daily basis
- ▶ Raise awareness among the participants about good habits for food waste reduction
- ▶ Make European citizens aware about the large number of people who can't afford a decent diet
- ▶ Promote the work of partner organisations: food redistribution organisations, campaigning organisations, Gleaning networks

What you need

- ▶ A **location**: A place where to hold your event and a place where to cook (if possible at the same place): public area, canteen, or another
- ▶ A **cook** (or lots of cooks)
- ▶ **Volunteers**
- ▶ **Get your unsold food**: Food waste happens at a large scale further up the supply chain, for example owing to cosmetic standards laid down by retailers, or because orders have been cancelled. Therefore farmers, packers and wholesalers can often help by diverting what would otherwise be wasted or fed to livestock. Retailers can also donate food that they won't sell anymore or a farmer that is willing to participate in a [gleaning action](#)



- ▶ A **transporter** for the day of the action (and maybe for the day before, depending on your planning)
- ▶ **Information and communication material:** Advertise for your Feeding the 5000 action by putting up promotional posters on strategic points or via other communication means. Inform the farmer, retailers and volunteers about the action by giving out information on [why food waste prevention is important](#) before the event.

Preparing the action

Before the EWWR (at least one month beforehand)

- ▶ Get in touch with the “Feeding the 5000” team
- ▶ Build a coalition of partners who will work together to combat food waste and help deliver the event
- ▶ Find a cook that could guide volunteers through the cooking process. If possible, try to find a chef with some public prominence, in order to boost public interest for your event
- ▶ Decide on your target audience: Who do you want to reach as volunteers for this Feeding the 5000 action? Pupils, your colleagues, employees, neighbours?
- ▶ Prepare a poster to advertise for your Feeding the 5000 action or use the EWWR posters ([download here](#))
- ▶ Send the information on your action and the [EWWR factsheet about food waste](#) per mail to your target group or print it and give it out to them
- ▶ Invite people to participate in your event
- ▶ Find out from your sources which types of products you will get from them. Look for a recipe for these foods (for instance recipes that are easy to make for large numbers of people, like soups, tortillas, paellas, etc.) and see what you could do with other foods that you’ll get but won’t need (make juices, give it to food banks, etc.)
- ▶ Try to find pigs to which you could feed any produced that has not entered a kitchen (catering waste is not permitted to be fed to livestock in Europe ([thepigidea.org](#)))
- ▶ See what tools you need (cooking material, reusable plates, etc.) and where you could get them from

Pre-EWWR (one or two weeks beforehand)

- ▶ Enhance advertisement of your event, remind people about the event and invite them again to take part
- ▶ Try to involve the staff of the retailer and/or farmer
- ▶ Clarify the details of the action with the shop manager/farmer: when will you come to pick up the unsold food/to harvest? Can you use their cartons and packaging for transportation or do you need to bring your own material?
- ▶ Print information material to be distributed during the action, informing staff and participants about food waste and food waste prevention measures

Implementing the action = day of the action!

- ▶ Implement your Feeding the 5000 action:
 - Set up the venue
 - Get your food and transport it to the event venue
 - Bring all volunteers together to wash, peel, chop and cook the meal
 - Feed the 5000! (or less)
- ▶ Use the event to inform about the problematic of food waste and to give out tips and tricks to participants on how to reduce food waste in everyday life. Distribute the information material
- ▶ Take pictures and videos
- ▶ **Conduct a food waste trash audit** ([EWWR food waste calculator](#)) to evaluate the amount of food used for the preparation of the meal for 5000. On this basis you can then evaluate how much waste was avoided
- ▶ Communicate the results of your food waste audit to the participants!



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Evaluation and feedback

After the EWWR

- ▶ Give feedback to your Coordinator: number of participants, amount of waste avoided, etc.
- ▶ Send back pictures and videos of your action to your Coordinator

More information

- ▶ Information material
 - Food waste and its impact: [Do you dare to be aware?](#)
 - Tips to reduce food waste:
 - [Shopping & Planning](#)
 - [Storing](#)
 - [Cooking & Eating](#)
 - [Use-by / best-before dates](#)
- ▶ Examples of actions
 - Feeding the 5000 events (selection): [London](#) (2011), [Paris](#) (2012), [New York](#) (2013), [Brussels](#) (2014)
 - DiscoSoupe events: discosoupe.org/events
- ▶ EWWR Coordinator's website/contact: www.ewwr.eu/list-organisers
- ▶ European Week for Waste Reduction: www.ewwr.eu contact@ewwr.eu
- ▶ Relevant stakeholders:
 - Feeding the 5000: www.feeding5k.org
 - Disco Soupe discosoupe.org
- ▶ Interesting links
 - European Commission: [Stop Food Waste](#)
 - [European Environment Agency](#) (EEA)
 - [European Environmental Bureau](#) (EEB)
 - Feeding the 5000: [Food waste facts](#)
 - [Food and Agriculture Organization](#) (FAO)
 - [Love Food Hate Waste](#)
 - Love Food Hate Waste: [Food waste recycling - What to do with the food you can't eat?](#)
 - OECD [Food Chain Network](#)
 - [SAVE FOOD initiative](#)
 - Slow Food Movement: www.slowfood.com
 - TED Talk by Tristram Stuart: [The global food waste scandal](#)
 - [Think.Eat.Save.](#)

