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**12th online survey on food waste**

The 12th online survey on food waste was conducted in the framework of the LIFE - FOODPRINT project "Awareness - raising campaign to prevent and manage food waste among consumers, the food and hospitality industries", aiming to explore the public's views and habits on food waste management. The survey was conducted online through Dias Group websites (Signalive, Sportime.com.cy, I love style, City.com.cy, Check In, Economy today, MyCyprusTravel.com) during the period 27/03/2023 - 06/04/2023. The sample of participants ranged from 1289 to 1639 people depending on the question. Since the survey was conducted online, the sample of participants is random, and a percentage of the participants may not be Cyprus residents. The survey consisted of 4 questions, only one of which has been repeated in similar previous surveys conducted during the project. The aim of repeating questions is to measure possible variations in the public's views over time.

The first question concerned consumers' attitudes towards the amount of food prepared or ordered at home when there are visitors or at a restaurant.

1. When you have guests for dinner or when you go out to a restaurant, which of the two statements best describes your behaviour?		
	Answer	2023
A	I usually prepare/order more food than I need to make sure we don't run out of food	69%
B	I usually prepare/order as much food as needed to avoid leftovers	31%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>
	<b>Number of participants</b>	<b>1639</b>



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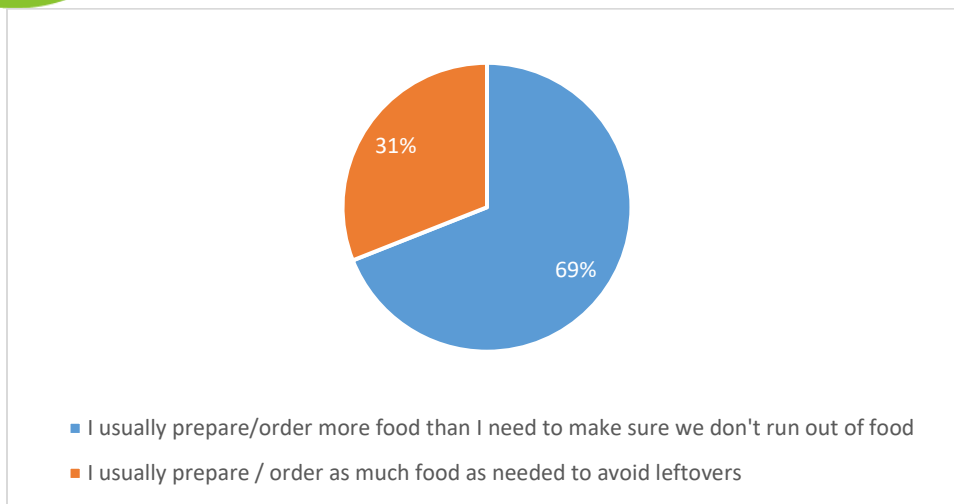


Table and Figure 1: Results of 1<sup>st</sup> poll question

As shown in Figure 1, 7 out of 10 consumers said that they tend to prepare or order more food than they actually need to make sure they don't run out of food. These results are not surprising as having plenty of food on the table is a cultural characteristic of the Cypriot people. This is also an expectation or criterion many times for hospitality and catering venues, i.e. the more food available, the better. Unfortunately, this perception increases the possibility of excess food and the likelihood of food waste creation. The need to have plenty of food is a perception that needs to change in order to achieve a reduction in food waste.

The second question concerned the habit of taking away leftover food from restaurants. This question has been repeated in a previous similar survey in 2020 and the results are included in table and figure 2.

2. While you are out in restaurants and cafes, how often do you take surplus food with you at home?			
	Answer	2020	2023
A	Always	25%	25%
B	Quite Often	25%	30%
C	Sometimes	20%	20%
D	Rarely	14%	15%
E	Never	16%	11%
	<b>Total</b>	100%	100%
	<b>Number of participants</b>	1104	1449



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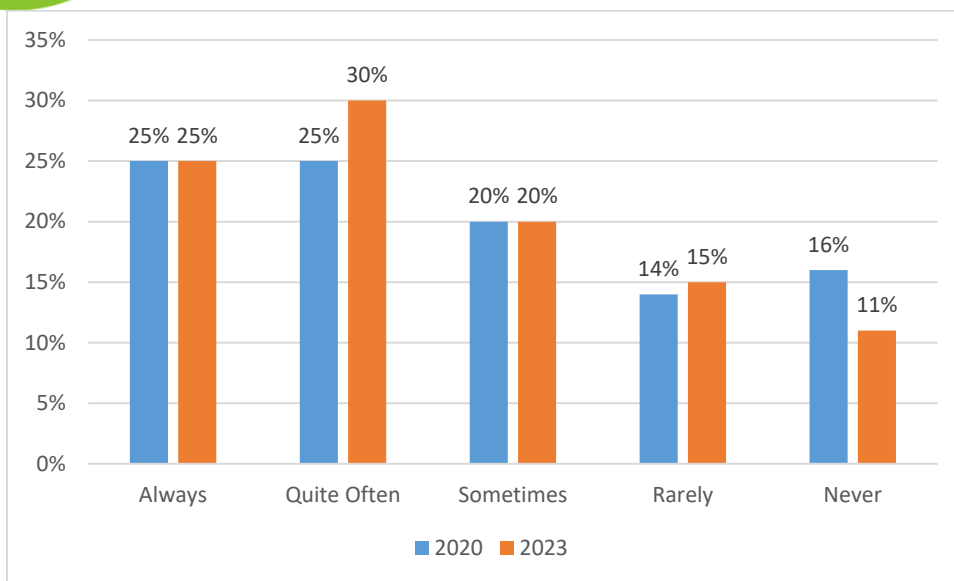


Table and Figure 2: Results of 2<sup>nd</sup> poll question

The answer with the highest percentage was "Quite often"(30%), with a 5% increase compared to the 2020 results. While the second most popular response (25%) is "Always" taking leftover food from outings at home, a percentage that shows no change between 2020 and 2023. There was a significant decrease in the percentage of "Never" responses from 16% in 2020 to 11% in 2023. We can therefore conclude that this positive habit seems to have become more popular between 2020 and today.

The third question concerned the practice of "First Come, First Served" food storage in the household.

3. In your household, in terms of food management, how often do you apply the practice of 'First Come, First Served'? That means I consume first what I buy first. I would say that in my household this is what happens...

	Answer	2023
A	Never	7%
B	Not so often	16%
C	Sometimes	22%
D	Quite often	35%
E	Always	20%
	<b>Total</b>	100%
	<b>Number of participants</b>	1353



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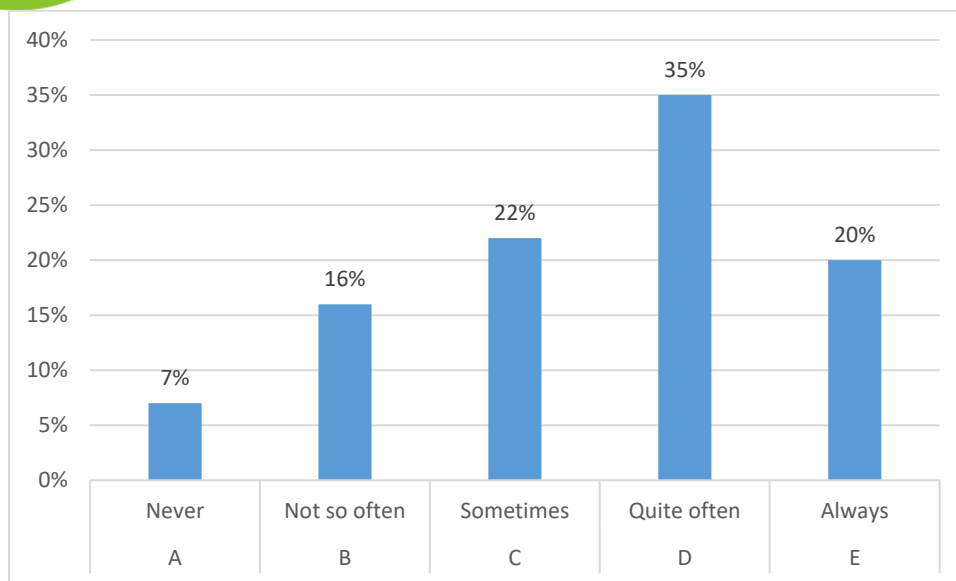


Table and Figure 3: Results of 3<sup>rd</sup> poll question

Responses are skewed towards "Quite often" with the highest percentage at 35%, while 22% practice this practice "sometimes" and 20% "always". Overall, it seems that the results are positive in terms of applying the practice "First come, first consumed" since the majority of respondents (55%) state that they apply this practice quite often or always.

The fourth question concerned composting at home and the reasons why some consumers might not practice this habit. Table and figure 4 present the results.

4. Regarding composting, which of the following apply in your case?		
	Answer	2023
A	I do composting at home	12%
B	I do not know how composting is done	30%
C	I do not compost because it takes effort/time	14%
D	I do not compost because I have no space	29%
E	I do not compost because I am afraid of odours/attracting insects and rodents	15%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>
	<b>Number of participants</b>	<b>1289</b>



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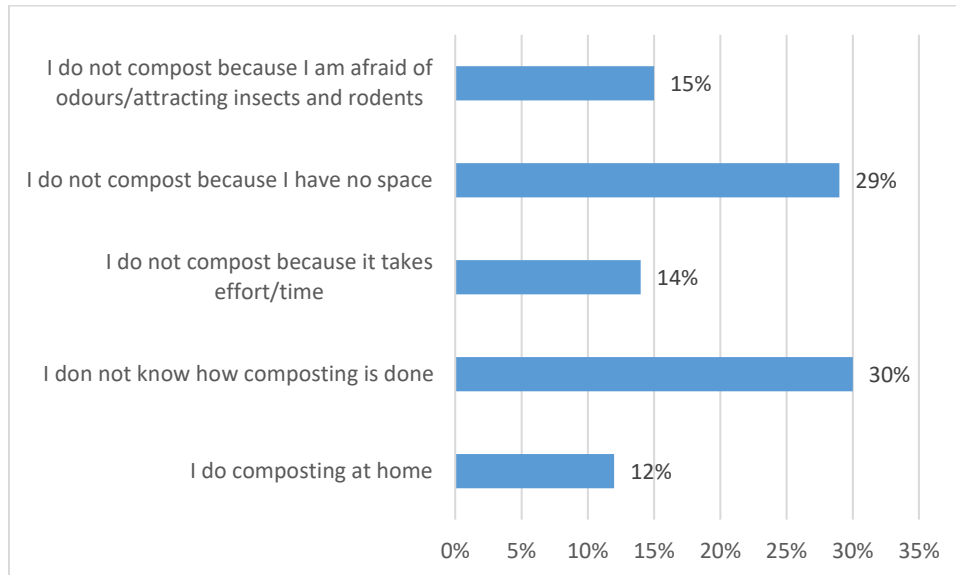


Table and Figure 4: Results of 4<sup>th</sup> poll question

The results on household composting are particularly negative as 88% of respondents say they do not compost at home. An important result is that 30% of respondents have answered that they do not know how composting is done. This indicates a gap in people's knowledge and may be a topic that needs to be given more emphasis in future campaigns to reduce food waste in households. Also there exist solutions to issues such as little space, odours and attracting insects and rodents. Today there are many composters available on the market, in various sizes and technologies that reduce odours and close in a way that do not allow rodents or insects to enter the composter.

In a similar survey conducted in June 2022, 62.3% of respondents said that reducing food waste through composting is "Very" or "Quite important" for environmental protection. Based on this percentage one would expect that the habit of composting would be more widespread, but the fact remains that the actions to promote it in Cyprus are limited and fragmented.

The results of this survey show that there is significant space for improvement in household food management habits and perceptions. More substantial changes need to be made in the habits of Cypriot consumers, such as reducing the unnecessary amounts of food prepared or ordered, more systematic takeaway of surplus food from restaurants and greater adoption of composting. In view of the mandatory universal implementation of "Pay as I Throw" systems in Cyprus in 2024, but also in order to achieve the European target of reducing landfilling of municipal waste to 10% or less by 2030, more intensive efforts need to be made by all stakeholders to inform more and more citizens about the problem of food wastage and the practices to reduce it.



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