



Save Food. Waste less.
Τέρμα στη σπατάλη τροφίμων!

6th Online Research of FoodPrint campaign on food waste

What do we know, what habits do we have?

The habits of Cypriot citizens in relation to food preservation and storage to identify ways to reduce food waste was the focus of the 6th online survey of the FoodPrint campaign.

The purpose of the research was to understand if there is adequate knowledge or established habits that cause food waste.

As part of the project LIFE – FOODPRINT “Awareness – raising campaign to prevent and manage food waste among consumers, the food and hospitality industries” the 6th online food waste survey was conducted to analyse the public's views on food waste reduction strategies. The poll was conducted online through the Dias Group websites (Sigmalive, Sportime.com.cy, I love style, City.com.cy, Check In, Economy today, MyCyprusTravel.com) between 07/02/2022 and 09/02/2022. The sample for each question ranged from 1580 to 1949 people depending on the response. A percentage of the participants do not live in Cyprus. Each question gave alternative options for its answer. The research examined the public's habits regarding food preservation and storage, in order to understand if there is first of all the required knowledge on the subject, but also established habits that contribute to or prevent food waste.

Below is the analysis and description of the questions and answers about food preservation in the fridge and freezer. The first question was: "What temperature should your fridge be at? ". Table and Figure 1 below show the results.

1. What temperature should your fridge be at?

	Answer	Number	%
A	Above 5°C and below 8°C	768	39.4%
B	Above 3°C and below 5°C	928	47.6%
C	Above 0°C and below 3°C	253	13%
	Total:	1949	100%



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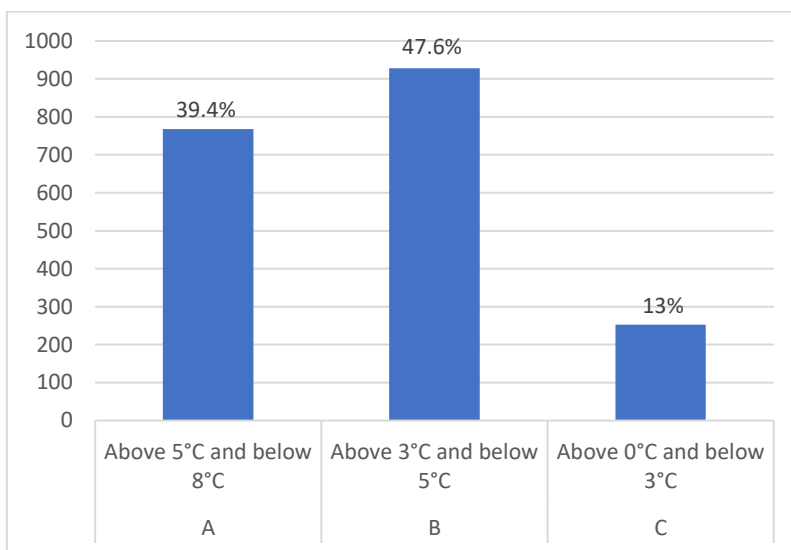


Table and Figure 1: 1st question results

In this case, answer B is the correct one, while answer C is also correct, since temperatures 1°C – 3°C are also good for the preservation of food in the fridge. The largest percentage of the participants (47.6%) answered that the temperature at which the fridge should be maintained is above 3°C and below 5°C. The second most popular answer (39.4%) was that the correct temperature to maintain the fridge is above 5°C and below 8°C, while the least popular answer (13%) was that the temperature should be above 0°C and below 3°C. We come to the conclusion that the majority of the respondents knew the correct temperature to preserve food in the fridge, but we cannot ignore that a substantial percentage of the respondents (39.4%) were not aware of the correct temperature. In this case, the wrong answer does not necessarily equate to a practically incorrect temperature setting in the participants' fridges, but we can assume that if asked to reset the temperature in their fridges, they would probably make the wrong temperature choice. This creates the conditions for food wastage resulting from incorrect food preservation methods.

The second question was about the optimal temperature in the freezer for the preservation of food. Specifically, the second question was: "What temperature should your freezer be at?". Table and Figure 2 below show the results.

2. What temperature should your freezer be at?

	Answer	Number	%
A	At -18°C	783	45.6%
B	At -15°C	384	22.4%



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C	At -8°C	550	32%
Total:		1717	100%

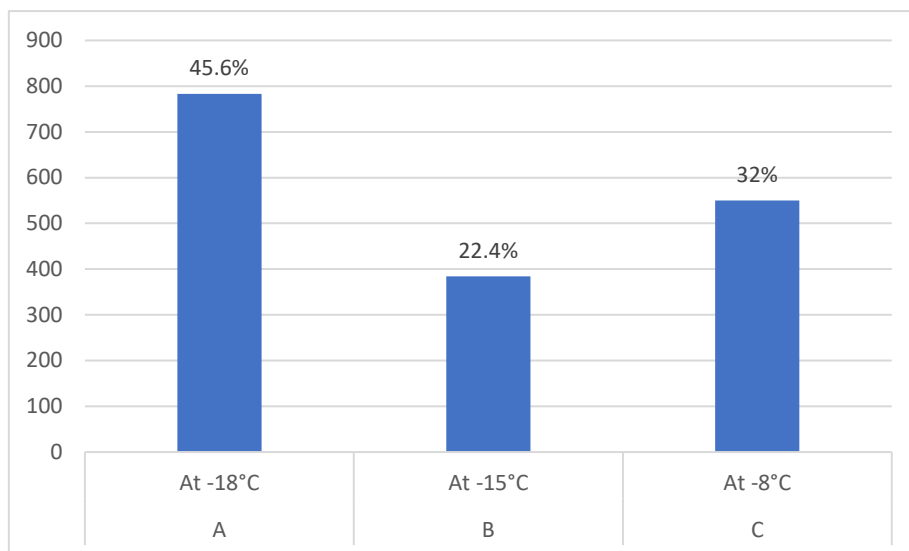


Table and Figure2: 2nd question results

The ideal temperature of the freezer is -18°C. The most popular answer was "at -18°C" with a percentage of 45.6%, while the second most popular answer was "at -8°C" with a percentage of 32%. Here we can conclude that almost half of the respondents know the correct temperature for the freezer which maximises the lifespan of food stored. Therefore, an action that could be implemented based on the answers to the first two questions is an information campaign for the public about the correct temperature of the fridge and freezer.

The third question concerned public awareness of the nutritional value of frozen foods. Specifically, the third question was: "Food that enters the freezer loses its quality and is less nutritious " with available responses "True" or "False". Table and Figure 3 below show the results.

3. Food that enters the freezer loses its quality and is less nutritious.

	Answer	Number	%
A	True	706	42.4%
B	False	960	57.6%
Total:		1666	100%



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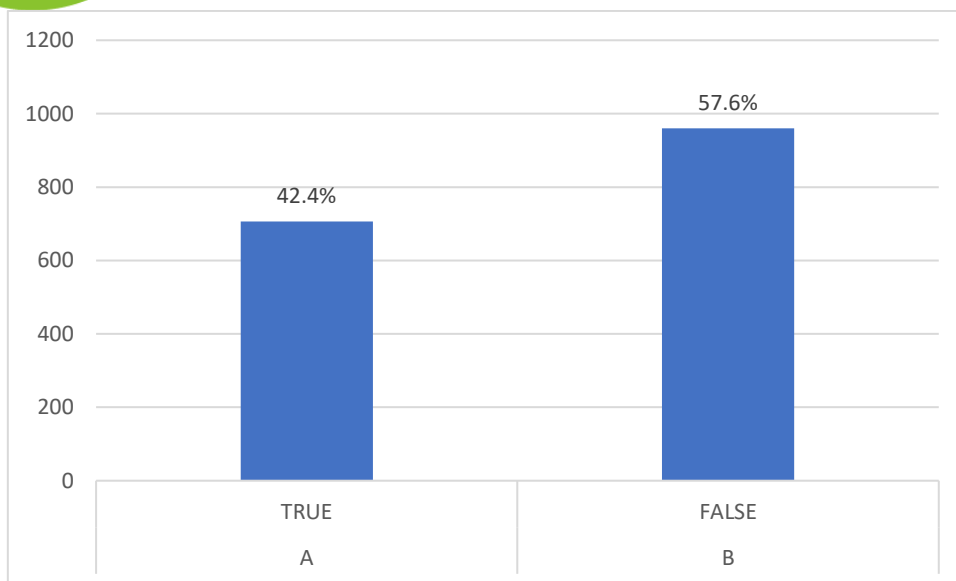


Table and Figure3: 3rd question results

Freezing food, when done properly, can retain more nutrients than other food preservation methods. Therefore, in this case the correct answer is "False". According to the results, the most popular answer was "False" with a percentage of 57.6% and the remaining 42.4% answered "True". Most of the respondents answered the question correctly, but still a large percentage (42.4%) of the respondents had a different opinion. This suggests that there is a large portion of the population who mistakenly believe that freezing food degrades it, and it is very likely that they do not follow this food storage practice.

The last question was about the right food thawing practices. Specifically, the question was: "What is the best way to defrost food from the freezer?". Table and Figure 4 below show the results.

4. What is the best way to defrost food from the freezer?

	Answer	Number	%
A	Placement under lukewarm water	61	3.9%
B	Placement in the fridge during the night	1,146	72.5%
C	On the kitchen counter until it thaws	373	23.6%
	Total:	1580	100%



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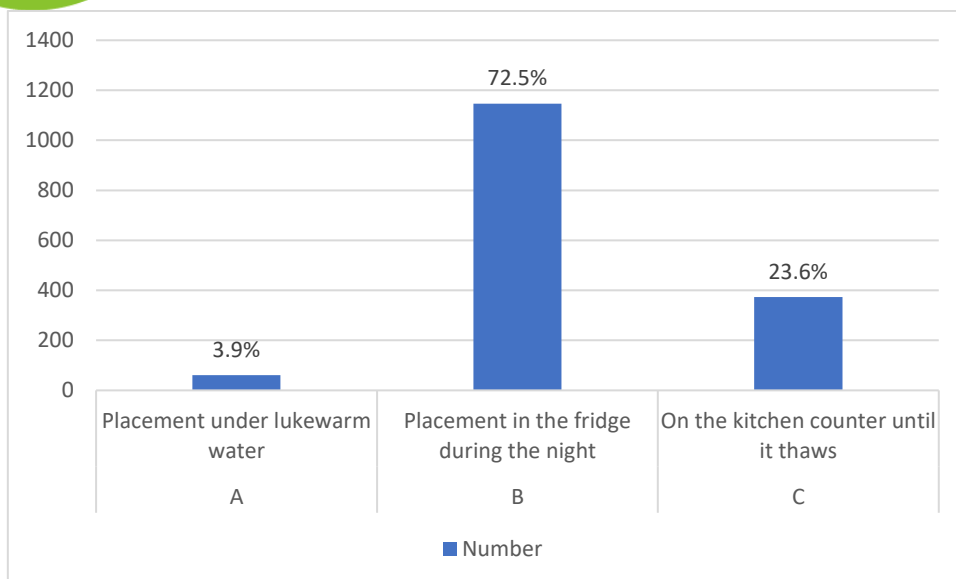


Table and Figure 4: 4th question results

The correct answer is option B and the majority of the participants (72.5%) answered correctly. The next most popular answer was "On the kitchen counter until it thaws" (23.6%), and with a very small percentage (3.9%) the answer "Placing it under lukewarm water". In this case, we can conclude that the majority knows the correct way to defrost frozen food in order to avoid the formation of bacteria.

Food must be kept at a safe temperature during thawing. It should not be thawed on the kitchen counter, outdoors or under warm water. These methods can leave food unsafe for consumption. There are four safe ways to defrost food: in the fridge overnight, under cold water (not lukewarm), in the microwave, and as part of the cooking procedure. Foods thawed in cold water or in the microwave must be cooked immediately after thawing.



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