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11th Online Food Waste Poll

The 11th online food waste survey was conducted as part of the LIFE - FOODPRINT project "Awareness - raising campaign to prevent and manage food waste among consumers, the food and hospitality industries" and aimed to analyse the public's views on food waste habits. The survey was carried out online through the Dias Group websites (Signalive, Sportime.com.cy, I love style, City.com.cy, Check In, Economy today, MyCyprusTravel.com) during the period 24/11/2022 - 27/11/ 2022. The sample ranged from 1267 to 2005 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 included 4 questions which were repeated in previous surveys conducted in 2021. The purpose of repeating questions is to measure possible differences in public opinion over time.

The first question concerned the frequency of keeping fruit and vegetables in the freezer.

1. How often do you keep fruits and vegetables in the freezer so that they do not spoil?			
	Answer	2021	2022
A	Constantly	21.3%	12.1%
B	Fairly often	15.4%	9.7%
C	Occasionally	8.8%	8.2%
D	Rarely	18.3%	16.2%
E	Never	36.2%	53.9%
	Total	100%	100%
	Number of participants	930	2005



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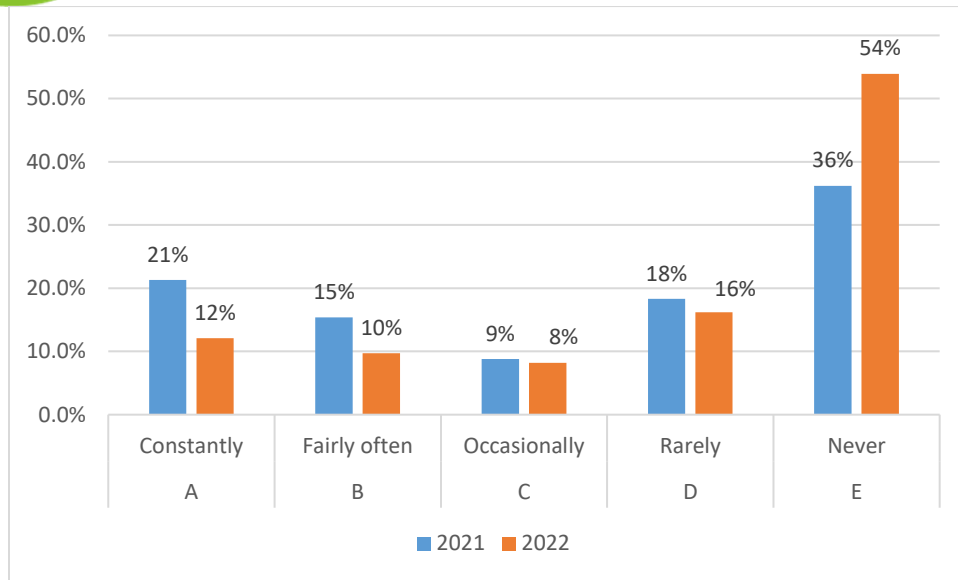


Figure 1. Question 1 Results for 2021 and 2022

Compared to 2021, the results of 2022 show a worsening picture regarding the habit of storing fruits and vegetables in the freezer. In 2022, 70% of participants answered that they “rarely” or “never” keep vegetables and fruits in the freezer, compared to 54% in 2021. As for the positive answers, they also show a deterioration since only 22% keep fruits and vegetables in the freezer “constantly” and “fairly often” compared to 36% in 2021. The reason for these changes is not known however it is possible that with the passing of the coronavirus pandemic people may have overcome the disruptions caused in their daily routine. They therefore have the ability to visit the food stores more often and hence the need for long-term food storage has decreased. It is a fact that people in Cyprus know that certain types of food can be preserved in the freezer, such as grape leaves, broccoli, carrots and olives, but with the right preparation there are also many other types of fruits and vegetables that can be preserved in the freezer. For example, zucchini, beans and tomatoes (as long as they are scalded), and fruits such as apples, bananas, grapes, oranges and others can be sliced and stored in special containers or freezer bags.

The second question concerned whether consumers know the correct methods for food storage.



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2. How well do you know the proper way to store food in order to maximise its shelf life?			
	Answer	2021	2022
A	Very well	15%	13.6%
B	Well enough	35.8%	35.4%
C	Somewhat	22.9%	26.1%
D	Not that well	13.6%	14.9%
E	Not well at all	12.7%	10%
	Total	100%	100%
	Number of participants	742	1510

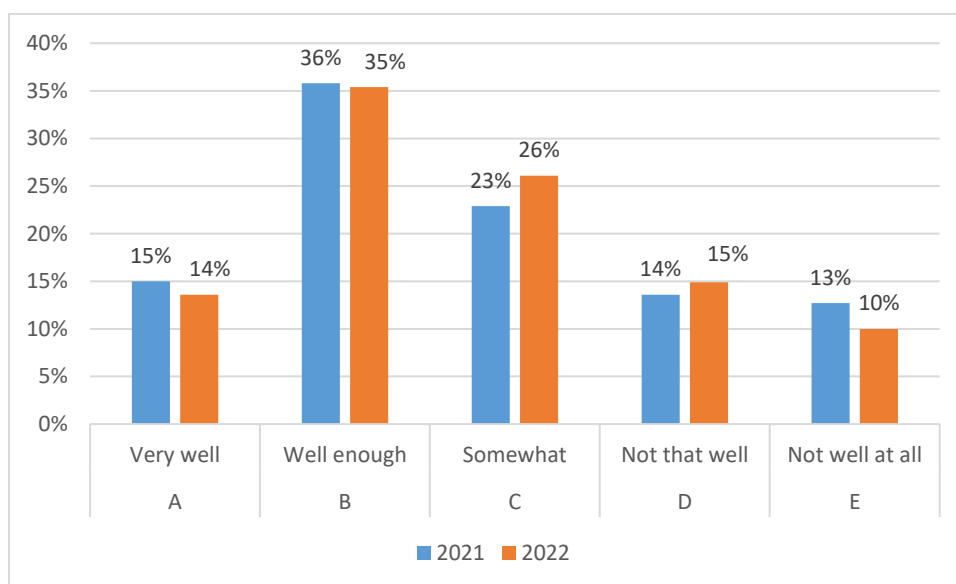


Figure 2. Question 2 Results for 2021 and 2022

Comparatively the results of 2021 and 2022 have very small differences. The total percentage of participants who know “very well” or “well enough” the correct way to store food in the 2021 survey was 51% while in the 2022 survey it is 49%. Accordingly, the percentage of participants who do not know at all or not so well of the correct ways to store food was 27% in 2021 and is 25% in 2022. The answer "well enough" has the highest percentage of responses in both instances. The answers to this specific question, however, concern the knowledge of storage methods and do not necessarily mean they are translated into actions. Examples of good food storage methods are referred to in the guide “Good practices to reduce food waste” which has been created in the context of the LIFE Foodprint project and can be found



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at the link <https://www.foodprintcy.eu/wp-content/uploads/PCS-COMPORST-FLYERompost-flyer.pdf> (only available in Greek language).

The third question concerned whether consumers know how they will manage any excess food before cooking or ordering food.

3. Do you consider how to manage your leftovers before you cook, or order food?			
	Answer	2021	2022
A	Yes, I know in advance what I will do with the food that is left	64.8%	68.9%
B	No, I do not consider in advance what I will do with the food that is left	35.2%	31.1%
	Total	100%	100%
	Number of participants	716	1433

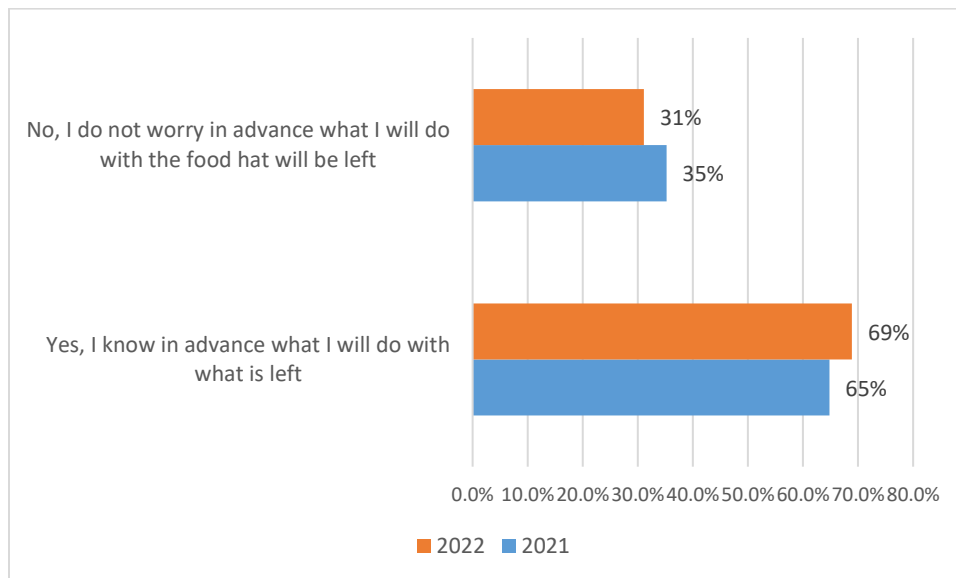


Figure 3. Question 3 Results in 2021 and 2022



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Comparing 2021 and 2022 results, there appears to be a potential improvement in food surplus management, as the percentage of participants who know in advance how to manage food surplus has increased. The answer, of course, does not determine whether the way of storing/disposing of leftover food will help to reduce waste, but the fact that the percentage of participants who state that they are aware of this issue has increased, improves the possibilities of reducing food waste.

The fourth question concerned the reasons why consumers may be trying to reduce food waste.

4. Which two, if any, of the following reasons are the most important reasons why you are trying to reduce food waste?			
	Answer	2021 % of answers	2022 % of answers
A	I am not trying to reduce food waste	5.1%	5.7%
B	It is easy	3.6%	3.3%
C	I save money	15%	21%
D	I save time from shopping	4.3%	5%
E	It is the right thing to do	23.1%	28.4%
F	The expectations of the family	2.6%	2.8%
G	Environmental concerns	22.4%	15%
H	Tackling consumerism	23.8%	18.6%
	Total	100%	100%
	Number of participants	1821	2141



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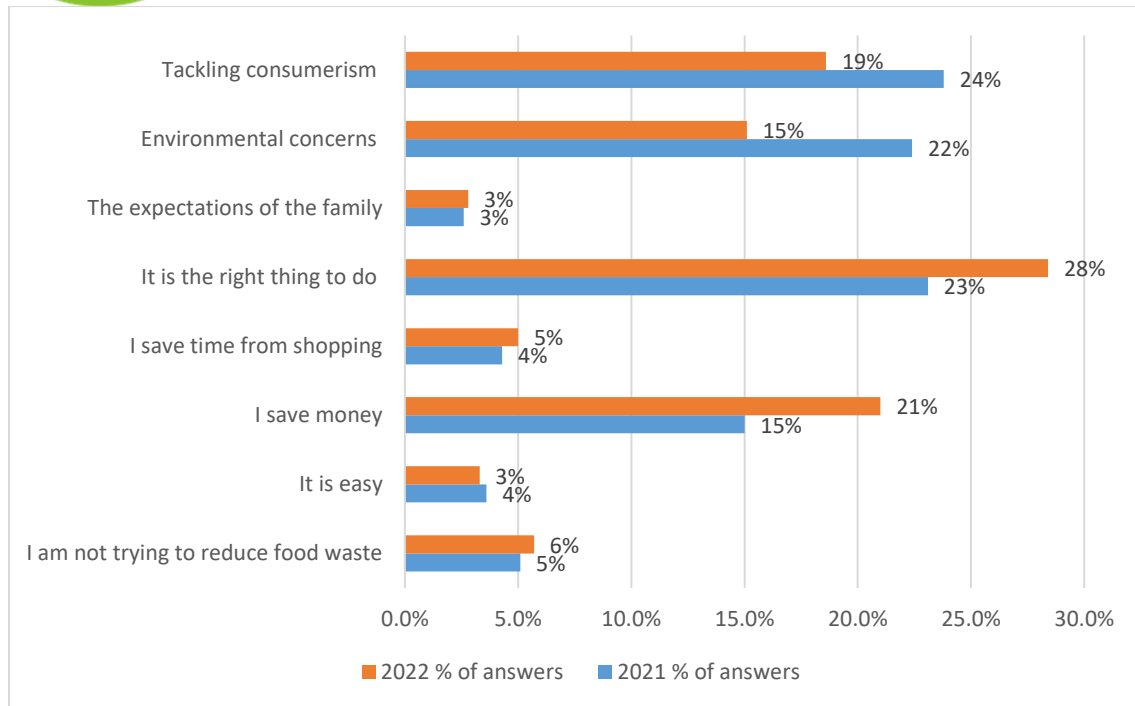


Figure 4. Question 4 Results for 2021 and 2022

In 2022, the answers with the highest percentage were "It's the right thing to do" (28%), "I save money" (21%) and "Tackling consumerism" (19%). In 2021, the largest percentage was recorded for the responses "Tackling consumerism" (24%), "It is the right thing to do" (23%) and "Environmental concerns" (22%). We see that there is a significant increase in the answer "I save money" from 15% in 2021 to 21% in 2022. A possible reason for this differentiation is likely to be the inflation in prices occurring internationally and in Cyprus. As a result, the economic benefit from any reduction in food waste becomes more important and obvious. There was only a slight difference in the percentage of people who don't try to reduce food waste (a slight decrease from 6% in 2021 to 5% in 2022), which is positive, but unfortunately there was a large decrease in the percentage for "Environmental Concerns" (from 22% in 2021 to 15% in 2022).

Food waste does not only result in the loss of valuable resources, but also has a significant contribution to climate change, as the biodegradation of food waste is associated with high greenhouse gas emissions. According to the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), food waste has a global carbon footprint of around 8% of all global human-caused greenhouse gas emissions¹. The benefits of

¹ Food Wastage footprint & Climate Change. FAO. <https://www.fao.org/3/bb144e/bb144e.pdf>



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preventing food waste, measured in any form, far outweigh any environmental benefits of recycling food waste.² That is why the main objective of the European Union is to reduce food waste at the end of the food chain, i.e. in households, restaurants and retail trade. For more information on the environmental cost of food waste you can follow the link below <https://www.foodprintcy.eu/wp-content/uploads/xartografisi-ekthesi.pdf>

² Bio-Waste In Europe — Turning Challenges Into Opportunities. 2020. <https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/bio-waste-in-europe>



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