

REPORT 2024

FOOD WASTE AND RESCUE IN ISRAEL

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10th
Annual
Report



NIS 211 billion (USD \$57b) lost: A decade of food waste in Israel and the solution alongside it

According to the 10th Annual Food Waste and Rescue Report by Leket Israel and BDO written in cooperation with the Ministry of Environmental Protection and the Ministry of Health, the Israeli economy has lost food valued at a cumulative NIS 211 billion (USD \$57b) over the past decade.

Israeli consumers are wasting less food, with a 13.3% decrease in per capita loss, dropping from 300 to 260 kilograms per year. But rising living costs and population growth keep the overall scale of food loss and waste extremely high.

In 2024 alone, 2.6 million tons of food valued at NIS 26.2 billion (USD \$7b) were discarded in Israel. This represents 39% of all food produced, equal to 1.3% of the national GDP. In household consumption alone, food loss amounted to NIS 10 billion (USD \$2.7b), an annual cost of NIS 10,785 (USD \$2,915) per household. This, while roughly 1.5 million residents (about 485,000 households) live with food insecurity and do not know whether they will be able to afford adequate, nutritious food by month's end.

The impact of food loss in Israel is not only economic; it carries steep environmental and health costs. According to the Report, the environmental cost of food loss is estimated at NIS 4.2 billion (USD \$1.14b) annually, including wasted water and land resources, pollutant emissions, and waste treatment.

At the same time, the health cost associated with food insecurity reaches NIS 5.8b (USD \$1.57b) annually, roughly 4% of national health expenditures, posing growing challenges for the healthcare system.

Since the publication of the State Comptroller's Report in 2015, which highlighted the absence of a comprehensive national food waste and rescue policy, Leket Israel has driven meaningful change in both policy and public awareness. Over the past decade, the Food Donation Act was passed and amended, food rescue and food security were incorporated into the National Food Security Program, food rescue was included in the Ministry of Welfare's support criteria, and inter-ministerial principles for measurement and action were established. In 2025, the government published for the first time a national plan to reduce food loss and waste, led by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture. The plan outlines clear avenues for action and, for the first time, introduces national targets for reducing loss and increasing food rescue. Together, these steps aim to prevent the loss of billions of NIS and benefit middle and lower socioeconomic groups who bear the greatest financial burden.

Gidi Kroch, CEO of Leket Israel: "NIS 211 billion (USD \$57b) worth of food was thrown away in just one decade. This is a national failure with no moral, environmental, social, or economic justification. After a decade of awareness, the time has come for action. We must stop throwing food away and start rescuing it. Leket Israel, the National Food Bank, has proven for years that the solution exists. It is possible to rescue nutritious food, turn waste into a resource, and connect abundance with need. For 22 years, Leket Israel has worked with thousands of farmers,



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manufacturers, retailers, and volunteers to rescue high quality food and distribute it to hundreds of thousands of families in Israel. According to the Report, every shekel invested in food rescue yields NIS 10.7 in value to the national economy. This is a cost effective, immediate, and sustainable solution. The government must allocate appropriate funding to achieve one clear national goal: an Israel without food loss."

Idit Silman, Minister of Environmental Protection: "The Food Waste Report presents a troubling reality that must be changed. The Ministry of Environmental Protection, together with the Ministry of Agriculture, recently published a national plan to reduce food loss and waste in Israel. The plan charts the path forward and provides an environmental and socio-economic response to one of the major challenges facing Israel's food systems. Food rescue is fundamental to building a sustainable food economy, easing burdens on households, reducing social gaps, and shrinking Israel's environmental footprint. The Ministry will continue implementing the plan through budgetary allocation and cross governmental and cross sector cooperation for the benefit of Israel's citizens."

Dr. Moran Blaychfeld Magnazi, Director of the Nutrition Division at the Ministry of Health: "The Ministry of Health places great importance on reducing food loss and expanding food rescue as part of addressing food insecurity and promoting healthy, sustainable nutrition. Increasing fruit and vegetable intake among these populations can significantly improve their health, enhance quality of life, and save the economy substantial costs. The Ministry participated in developing the National Food Security Program and the national framework for food security and is working to reduce food waste through its integration into public procurement and educational programs in local authorities and schools."

Chen Herzog, Chief Economist at BDO and editor of the Report: "Food loss totaling NIS 26 billion (USD \$7b) in the past year severely harms food security, the cost of living, and environmental quality. During the war, the Israeli economy paid a high price due to increased food loss, especially in agriculture. The cost of food loss ultimately falls on consumers and has been one of the drivers behind the roughly 15% rise in fruit and vegetable prices since the start of the war. The confrontation line areas near Gaza and in the North account for about 30% of agricultural output, and economic recovery plans for the North and South must include an operational national policy to reduce food loss and increase food rescue. Since the first Food Waste Report by Leket Israel and BDO ten years ago, the annual cost of food loss has risen by 45%, from NIS 18 billion (USD \$4.87b) in 2015 to NIS 26 billion (USD \$7b) today. The lack of national policy and budget allocation for reducing food loss is an ongoing failure. The 2026 state budget must be updated to include funding for implementing a national food rescue plan already this year."

