

ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED

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LEAD PARTNER ORGANISATION

AC3A

**Service platform B2B
to connect growers and
businesses**

The Food Waste Problem

In Europe, the fresh vegetable market is very selective: all actors in the supply chain have quality standard and won't buy products that does not meet their requirements. When harvesting, producers will often perform a first selection to leave in the fields out of specification products. This allows them to stop spending more money on non-sellable products. While specification criteria are set to select only the best products for the consumers, it also means that some perfectly edible products are going to waste.

For example, supermarket won't accept oversized butternut squashes because their customers are not interested to buy these. In our leading case, Anya Van Der Hoff from L'Aunay Lubin farm (France) produces butternut squash and had some of her production above the size threshold. She wanted to address this issue because it represent an important food waste and a loss of revenue for her.



The Food Waste **Solution**

Out of specification vegetables are sometimes as good as perfectly shaped vegetables. It's the case with oversized butternut squashes. Some people even says that they are more tasteful.

The normal supply chain does not accept such products, so we had to focus on **finding other markets**. For the example of the butternut, we realized that catering companies or restaurants wouldn't mind a slightly bigger butternut as they are always preparing a lot of food at the same time. They can even benefit from tastier products for a limited price which is a win-win for them and the producers.



The Food Waste **Impact of the Solution**

How much food was saved by this solution during the project?

- 0,2 tonnes in 2018
- Farmers changed practices in 2019 to have no oversized products (potentially this decrease their on farm food loss by 0,2 tonnes)
- 247 tonnes of out of spec fruits and vegetables were saved by #hetezomeroogst campaign in the Netherlands in 2018 and 2019.

How much food do you expect to save in 2020?

- Difficult to estimate, it will depend on the number of farmers involved.

How much food will be saved 5 years after the end of the project (on a yearly base)?

- Difficult to estimate, it will depend on the number of farmers involved.

Project Food Heroes aims to reduce food losses in the primary sectors (on farm and fisheries) by creating higher value uses for byproducts and products that are out of specification. Throwing it away is such a waste. This project is funded by INTERREG North West Europe, European Regional Development Fund.