

Over a billion tonnes of food wasted every year: UN

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A box of food scraps in San Francisco, California.

Around a third of the food produced in the world every year -- around 1.3 billion tons -- gets lost or wasted, the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation said on Wednesday.

"Given the limited availability of natural resources it is more effective to reduce [food](#) losses than increase food production in order to feed a growing [world population](#)," the FAO said in a report.

FAO said the amount of food lost or wasted every year is equivalent to more than half of the world's annual cereals crop.

Some 925 million people around the world suffer from hunger.

The report said that the problem in the [developing world](#) was mainly food losses -- through, for example, crop failures and poor infrastructure.

In industrialised countries, the issue is more about "retailers and consumers throwing perfectly edible foodstuffs into the trash."

The report found that in Europe and North America consumers wasted between 95 and 115 kilograms (209 and 253 pounds) of food every year.



A Pakistani woman cradles her malnourished infant at a temporary tent in Sukkur. Around a third of the food produced in the world every year -- around 1.3 billion tons -- gets lost or wasted, the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation has said.

The report found that in the retail industry there was an "over-emphasis on appearance". "Surveys show that consumers are willing to buy produce not meeting appearance standards as long as it is safe and tastes good," it said.

"Consumers in rich countries are generally encouraged to buy more food than they need," it said, giving as an example oversized ready-to-eat

meals produced by the [food industry](#) and fixed-price buffets in restaurants.

The data was contained in a report commissioned by FAO from the Swedish Institute for Food and Biotechnology for "Save Food!" -- a conference being held in Germany later this month.

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