



## 10 Minutes For The Planet

### A Shameful Waste - France: the food-loving nation's stance ©

by Sarah Heath and Catherine Balter-Kendall

Stressed syllables are underlined and in **bold**.\*

Hello! I'm Sarah Heath and you're listening to 10 Minutes for the Planet on EnglishWaves.

In Part 1 of A Shameful Waste, a more general overview of the shocking statistics relating to global food waste was **addressed**. Part 2 focuses on Europe and more particularly France's role at making a change for the positive. The greatest food lovers on the planet are **leading the way** in **preventing** such great quantities of food waste!

The **European** Commission has compiled a report into food waste **across** its member states which shows that 20% of food is lost or wasted. This **equates to** 47 million tonnes coming from **households** but there is wastage right through the food chain as a whole. In addition, 97% of organic waste ends up in **landfills**, creating emissions of methane as it **decomposes**.

The reasons **behind** such **wastefulness** are varied: **amongst** the general public, there are **misunderstandings** over best before and use by dates and **insufficient** planning when shopping. In the restaurant and **catering sector**, there are **difficulties** predetermining customer numbers and miscalculation when ordering standardised portion sizes. At production level, stock management issues particularly with **perishable** goods can be **problematic**, as can be damage to produce and packaging during **transportation**. But possibly the **over-riding** worry is the ignorance that each sector has of the **scale** of the waste they **produce** and how that relates to the problem globally.

At government level, France has been leading the way in changing the law on how **supermarkets dispose** of their food waste. In 2016, they became the first country in the world to pass **legislation** which prohibits supermarkets over a specified size throwing away unused products. The law **dictates** that they must sign donation contracts with **charitable** organisations such as food banks or face a **fine** of up to €75,000 or two years in prison.

**to lead the way** (exp.) to guide, to be the first and set an example

**to prevent** (vb.) to stop

**to equate to** (vb.) to be equal to

**household** (n.) family unit who live together

**landfill** (n.) a place where waste is buried

**wastefulness** (n.) the habit of throwing away food

**misunderstanding** (n.) confusion, failure to understand sth. correctly

**catering sector** (exp.) area of industry involved in the provision of food and drink

**over-riding** (adj.) more important than others, dominant

**scale** (n.) magnitude, great size

**fine** (n.) a financial penalty imposed for wrong-doing

The destruction of food products disposed of in their own bins by, for example, pouring **bleach** over it to **prevent** people **foraging**, has also been banned.

Until this law was passed, **around** 35,000 metric tons of unused food products were donated to food banks and the hope of the organisation Banques Alimentaires is that an **additional** 15% donated by supermarket chains could mean an extra 10 million meals for France's most underprivileged citizens. But the French Ministry of Ecology, Energy and **Sustainable** Development also requires that organic waste is recycled if levels reach over 120 tons **although**, **eager** to **include** catering and hospitality industries, these levels have been slightly lowered more recently.

In 2017, a **joint survey** driven by the **Economist** and the Barilla Centre for Food and Nutrition Foundation **announced** that as a **result** of France's dedication to **tackling the problem, they came out top** that year in the Food Sustainability Index which **analyses** sustainability in 25 countries in Europe, the Middle East, Asia and the Americas. France's levels of food waste have dropped to under 2% and French consumers now waste half that of Americans.

But consumers must nevertheless also take their share of the responsibility: Parisian residents are being encouraged to recycle their food waste in an initiative by disposal services. **Waste sorting** kits are to be distributed to 120,000 households including a seven-litre box into which food waste must be thrown and recycled in this new biowaste **scheme**. Once collected the biowaste will be converted into **fertilisers** or biofuels. By 2020, the **entire** capital should be operating and recycling under this **initiative**.

And those **ugly** vegetables? As far back as 2014, the French supermarket chain, Intermarché, launched a **campaign** to celebrate ugly fruit and veg. The campaign sold 1.2 tonnes of less **aesthetically** pleasing fruit and veg in 2 days! Who said ugly doesn't taste good?

**bleach** (n.) a chemical used to whiten or sterilize

**to forage** (vb.) to search for food (in the bins)

**eager** (adj.) hoping, wishing

**joint survey** (exp.) research done by two organizations working together

**to tackle a problem** (exp.) to try to deal with/solve a problem

**to come out (on) top** (exp.) to be in first position

**waste sorting** (exp.) to divide rubbish into distinct categories for recycling

**scheme** (n.) programme

**ugly** (adj.) not attractive

**\*Note!**

Here are some common 2 syllable words where the stress lies on the 2<sup>nd</sup> syllable: **across**, **behind**, **around**, **although**, **result**, **entire**

Here are some 4 syllable words with the main stress on the 1<sup>st</sup> syllable: **difficulties**, **perishable**, **supermarkets**, **charitable**, **fertilisers**

Here are some 4 syllable words with the main stress on the 3<sup>rd</sup> syllable: **European**, **insufficient**, **problematic**, **transportation**, **legislation**

