



## **“Eaten up!” Use instead of waste**

Text: Isolde Bornemann, Photos: Dieter Bornemann

**More food is thrown away in private households than in agriculture, industry, the catering industry, and retail combined. This waste of resources is a significant problem for the environment and a financial burden for families.**

Food is often thrown away casually, without much thought. Few people are aware of the impact. The single lemon or slice of bread that ends up in the trash contributes only a small portion of waste. However, extrapolated over a year, a country, or even the entire world, this amounts to an incredible mountain of waste. One-third of the food produced worldwide is never eaten. Its production generates climate-damaging greenhouse gases, and the waste of resources such as land, energy, and labor is enormous.

## The facts

On average, each person in Austria throws away 75 kilograms of food. This is confirmed by figures from the Vienna University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences and the WWF[1].

30 to 40 percent of all food produced worldwide is wasted instead of consumed. The biggest wasters are private households, which are responsible for 55 percent of food waste. This is an extreme burden on the environment; 10 percent of greenhouse gases are caused by wasted food. Compared to the countries of the world, food waste would be the third-largest emitter of climate-damaging greenhouse gases.

[1] <https://www.wwf.at/nachhaltig-leben/lebensmittelverschwendung/>

## The experiment

We asked eleven families to keep track of what food they throw away for four weeks. These foods were then repurchased and photographed with the family. Each family provided insight into their eating habits – with an unannounced look into their refrigerator.



HELMAR (45), TIMON (7), LIVIO (12), CHRISTINA (46)





LOTTE (18), MIKE (53), CATHERINE (54), FRANZ (14)

Then we went to a food wholesaler and assembled the 75 kilograms of food and documented it in a photo.



75 kilograms of food per person ends up in the trash



## The multimedia project

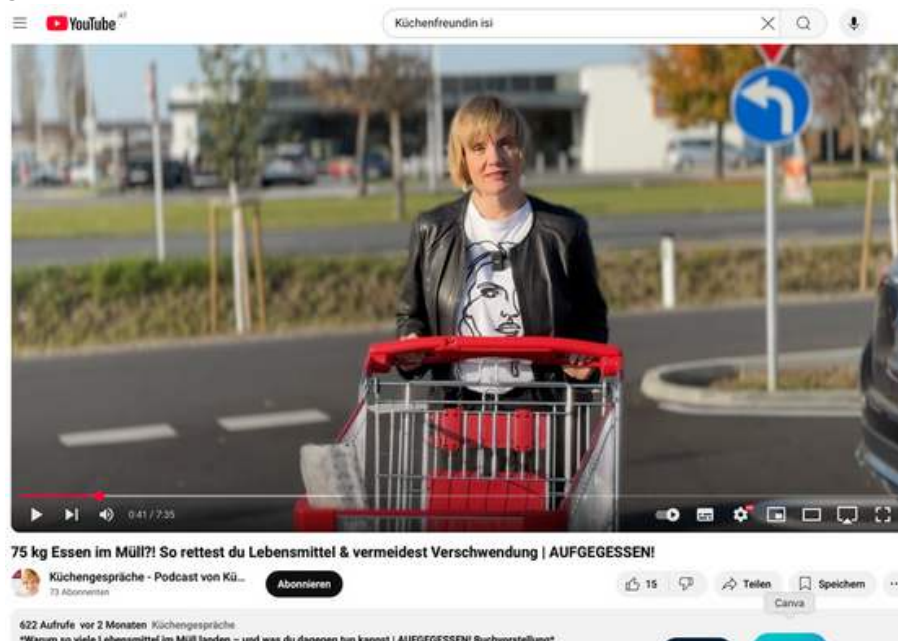
The result is a book entitled “Eaten Up!”



There is also a photo exhibition.



And a YouTube video and several podcast episodes of “Kitchen Conversations.”



[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1g-0\\_fc17w8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1g-0_fc17w8)



## The impact

The aim of this project is to engage as many people as possible and thus encourage them to reflect on their own food habits. To this end, we have already reached around three million people through extensive press work. Among other things, Austria's largest daily newspaper, the Kronen Zeitung, dedicated the cover story of its Sunday supplement to our project. We also appeared on the public television channel ORF and in the book magazine "Kontext" on the cultural channel Ö1. There have also been numerous reviews in Austrian and other European newspapers, magazines, and blogs.



The photos from the book will be on display at Europe's largest photography festival, "La Gacilly Baden," in Baden near Vienna, from June 13 to October 12, 2025. The life-size images of the families who participated in the experiment will be displayed on a 50-meter-long display. The exhibition will attract approximately 300,000 visitors.



## What to do?

There are concrete ways for each of us to actively combat food waste. For example, spend a few weeks writing down everything that ends up in the trash. This will show you what we're overbuying, and what we like to buy but don't like to eat. A list is available for download:



QR Code zur Website

*Aufgegessen!*



Gekaufte und doch nicht gegessene Lebensmittel  
**Das haben wir in einem Monat weggeworfen**

DATUM	WAS	MENGE	WARUM ist das Lebensmittel weggeworfen worden

Liste zum Buch "Aufgegessen!" / Verlag Edition Lammerhuber

[www.kuechenfreundin.at](http://www.kuechenfreundin.at)

The website "Küchenfreundin" offers practical tips and tricks for optimal food storage to keep it fresh longer. It also features recipes that demonstrate sensible and tasty ways to prepare leftover produce. It also offers tips for proper shopping planning and proper food storage.

The topic of "best before date" (MHD) is also addressed – which is a hurdle for many people who want to consume products after this date.

The "Eat Up!" project aims to encourage self-reflection and the willingness to reduce one's own "mountain of garbage." Because if everyone throws away a little less, we can all achieve a lot together.

**Isolde "Isi" Bornemann** is a food blogger, podcaster and sustainable food expert. She runs the food blog "Küchenfreundin" and talks to food experts about quality products, enjoyment and sustainability in her podcast "Küchengespräche". She also works as a management consultant for marketing and sustainability. Born in Carinthia and now living in Vienna, she is passionate and respectful about the responsible use of food.

**Dieter Bornemann** is a TV journalist and photographer. In his pictures, he deals with socially relevant topics - from the widespread illness of depression to the effects of artificial intelligence (AI). His work has been featured in numerous exhibitions and media reports. Bornemann is a graduate of the "Vienna School of Photography" and attended the "New York Film Academy". He was chairman of the jury for the Federal Prize of Austrian Professional Photographers.