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CE4FOOD

The official newsletter of the Erasmus+ project



FOOD WASTE IS AVOIDABLE

By Monica Muresan, CE4Food Project manager, CCIABN, Romania.



Twenty six months ago, the CE4Food project (www.ce4food.eu), an Erasmus+ project, was launched, aiming to create a package of tools to support VET trainers in their adventure to changing mindsets regarding food waste in the hospitality sector, and not only. We had a wonderful partnership, with specialists deeply attached to the reduction of food waste who created, for our target groups, innovative, interesting and easy-to-access training material. All this can be found on the platform created by the Prof. Cătălin Gheorghe Amza, from the Polytechnic University of Bucharest and by Prof. Jim Baird from Caledonian University in Glasgow.

A first step in our approach was the creation of a curriculum for six modules, made in partnership under the guidance of Sofia Tsiortou / Drosostalida GR, which was then discussed and revised together with teachers from all the participant countries. Our warm thanks to the Bistrita Technological and Services High School, which was always with us. This was followed by the creation of modules, case studies and, last but not least, some very visible infographics that can be used by all those who want to learn about food waste and reduction.

Since implementing this project, I am personally much more attentive to food waste, wherever I go. I am glad to note that restaurants, canteens, hospitals, etc. are more and more aware of this problem and are trying to solve it. Portions are already smaller (but satisfying), menus in paper are no longer used, and customers are directed to view them on the Internet, recipes are rethought and food resources are wisely used.



I have asked myself, many times, what are the major sources of food waste. Besides our kitchens, events, and especially weddings, create the largest amounts of food waste. What remains on the plate, sometimes the untouched plate, goes directly to the municipal garbage. A solution would be a careful collaboration between the restaurant and those who organize the event. This would substantially reduce the amount of food waste in our communities.

I have also observed that when we travel and do not know the customs of the place, we may create large amounts of food waste. I travelled this year to Skagen/Denmark with my daughter. We ate at a small family restaurant in the port, where we ordered fish and chips, a very good choice given the freshness of the fish. But we didn't ask how big the portion of fries was, and it was really huge! At the end of the meal, more than one portion of fries was thrown away. In the meantime, other customers sat down next to our table, requesting, for 4 people, only two portions of fries.

So, they knew that the portions were too big and they could not be fully consumed. Therefore, when we travel and do not know the customs of the place, it would be good to ask how big the portions are and to reduce the order to how much we can really consume.

If you work in a place where food waste is possible, we encourage you to use the innovative Waste Business Canvas model, created by our partners, under the guidance of Prof. Jim Baird, and to identify your solutions for reducing food waste. You won't regret it!



Our unfairly discarded eggshells

By JB Heine, Lawton School, Spain

Eggshells are one of nature's most useful materials and are often overlooked as a resource in the modern world. As a biodegradable and naturally renewable material, eggshells can provide a sustainable solution for many of our daily needs. Not only are eggshells an abundant and easily accessible resource, but their properties also make them perfect for creating new materials and items such as kitchenware, jewellery, and even home decor. Their calcium-rich composition makes them both lightweight and durable.

We've all heard of the phrase "as sturdy as an eggshell," but did you know that eggshells can actually be used to absorb toxins in water? It's true! Eggshells are made up of calcium carbonate, which has the ability to absorb harmful toxins like lead and mercury. This makes it a great natural filter for water. It's also eco-friendly and easy to use - just grind up the eggshells and add them to the water. The calcium carbonate will then bind with the toxins, making the water safer to drink. The best part?

Eggshells are completely biodegradable, so they won't harm the environment. The next time you're looking for a natural way to filter water, don't forget about eggshells! It's a simple, affordable, and eco-friendly way to make water safe to drink.

Eggshells are rich in calcium, magnesium, and other minerals that are essential to human health. According to research, an average medium-sized eggshell contains over 1000 mg of calcium. That's more than what's found in most calcium supplements! Eating them can help strengthen your bones, reduce inflammation, and even prevent certain diseases. Eggshells are also a great source of other minerals, like magnesium, phosphorus, and zinc. These minerals are essential for strong bones and teeth and can help with everything from muscle contraction to cognitive function. Eggshells can even help with digestion. Studies have shown that they can act as a natural probiotic and help to reduce inflammation in the gut. Needless to say, eggshells are great fertilizers for your garden, as they take a long time to break down, releasing nutrients slowly over time.

So next time you crack an egg, don't throw out the shells - they're better used than wasted!



CATLOVE - A healthy, sustainable (and CIRCULAR!) gastronomic experience

By Nelson Sousa Mendes, CE4Food Project Researcher, Lawton School, Spain.

CATLOVE is a young catering and food supplying company located in the city of Gijón, in Asturias (northern Spain). As they state themselves, they're a lot more than just another trendy coffee shop in the city – they're a “healthy and sustainable gastronomic experience”, who focuses on making a good and proper use of all the food they serve – and produce! Definitely, a good example of a Circular Economy-mindset.

That's why we decided to include them as one of our case studies, as a best-practice example. We spoke with their CEO, Astrid, who kindly - and cheerfully – explained their philosophy and, most likely, the “secret” to their success story.

Born not long ago – back in 2019, just before “Covid times”, Catlove is a local food provider who cares about the environment and, therefore, as they state themselves, “every day we look to reduce our carbon footprint. We also care about equality and helping young people to develop their careers with us”.

As Astrid so well puts: “We try to work with small local producers and businesses wherever possible. Our aim is to boost the local economy and help them grow”.

They also have a strong focus on Health, as their products are “prepared without the use of processed sugars. We try to use mostly fresh and natural local products.”

Recently, we conducted a small interview with Astrid, focusing obviously on sustainability and Circular Economy, but also directing our conversation towards their social role as caterers and food providers with a different approach from the common standards.

The history of CatLove

The project was born in 2019 and presents itself as a sustainable company, who "cares about the environment", looking every day "how to reduce our carbon footprint". Catlove is also concerned with equality and helping young people to develop their professional careers.

They define themselves as a "proximity company", as they make a point of working with small producers and local businesses whenever possible. Their aim is to boost the local economy and help them grow.

They are health conscious, as their products are prepared without the use of processed sugars, using mostly fresh and natural local products.

They use local raw materials whenever possible, supporting small producers and local businesses. They like to use as many Km 0 and seasonal products as possible, as this guarantees higher quality and a sustainable offer. Their food packaging is 100% biocompostable.

They only work with products from their own production or from the best local artisans/producers; they define themselves as "bakers and confectioners at heart"!



CATLOVE CATERING, GIJÓN, SPAIN



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At CatLove they work with vegetarian and vegan products which are always available.

They are concerned with recycling, trying to reduce the impact of their premises on the planet, that's why all their packaging is bio-compostable.

They deliver their organic waste from fruit and coffee to make compost in Gijón.

"Creating jobs, growing our team and being part of our evolution is what gets us out of bed".

Catering for companies

At Catlove the client has at his disposal different options for his events, from informal sweet and savoury snack tables to picnic packing boxes of food for meetings. The idea is to use a service that may be consistent with your company's values and also consume locally, seasonally and sustainably.

They adapt their cooking to special diets and allergies, and, as they say "we don't want anyone to miss out on delicious, healthy and local food".



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