



Lomonosov Moscow State University

# Eurasian Center for Food Security

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Photo Credit: Ksenia Urakova

*Eurasian Center for Food Security experts took part in the FAO workshop on food security, nutrition and social protection in Armenia. ECFS scientists report on their contributions in the first article of the July Newsletter.*

*In addition, an ECFS researcher discusses Germany's experience in combating food loss and waste. The country has created a network of stores selling salvaged products, food banks are operating, and a special mobile app is also popular.*

*Finally, you will find an updated Event Calendar 2019/2020!*

## ECFS Experts Participated in the FAO Workshop on Food Security, Nutrition and Social Protection in Armenia

*By Elena Belova and Alexey Belugin*

Elena Belova and Aleksey Belugin, scientific experts from the [Eurasian Center for Food Security \(ECFS\) of Lomonosov Moscow State University](#) took part in the workshop “The State of Food Security and Social Protection in the Republic of Armenia,” which [was held](#) June 6–8, 2019, in Tsakhkadzor, Armenia.

The workshop’s main goal was to increase the capacity of national-level decision makers in food security, nutrition, and social protection measures in the

field of agriculture. It was attended by representatives of various Armenian ministries and departments, international organizations, universities, and research organizations.

The workshop was held within the framework of the [Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN \(FAO\)](#) project Developing Capacity for Strengthening Food Security and Nutrition in Selected Countries of the Caucasus and Central Asia, which is funded by the Russian



From left to right: Suzanna Karapetyan (expert on social protection, Armenia) and Elena Belova and Alexey Belugin (ECFS)

Federation and is being implemented in three target countries: Armenia, the Kyrgyz Republic, and Tajikistan.

In their lectures, Elena Belova and Aleksey Belugin reported on international approaches to food security and nutrition, an assessment of those approaches, and policy measures in this area, as well as country-specific approaches to the situation in the field of food security and nutrition.

Elena Belova lectured on the “The Concept of Food Security and Nutrition (International Approach),” “The Importance of Achieving Sustainable Development Goals for Strengthening Food Security and Nutrition,” and “Policy Measures to Strengthen Food Security and Nutrition.” The lectures given by Alexey Belugin covered the following topics: “Availability as an Aspect of Food Security: Fundamentals, Assessment and Key Indicators for Analysis,” “Accessibility as an Aspect of Food Security,” “Use and Stability as Aspects of Food Security: Fundamentals, Assessment and Key Indicators for Analysis.”

Heads of the Department of Food Security of the Ministry of Agriculture of Armenia, the Department of Social Protection of the Ministry of Labor and

Social Affairs of Armenia, the Department of Mother and Child Health of the Ministry of Health of Armenia, and representatives of the FAO—including from the country office in Armenia—also made presentations.

The main goals of the FAO project are to strengthen the links between social protection, food security, nutrition, and agriculture to form an integrated approach to promoting poverty eradication, and to improve food security on a sustainable basis. To achieve these goals, it is necessary to strengthen the capacity of state institutions as well as to coordinate policies and programs in agriculture, nutrition, and social protection at both the national and local levels.



Workshop participants discuss tasks during group work

The objectives of ECFS are related to the FAO project goals, and include educational and research activities aimed at increasing the capacity of government officials, expanding knowledge about food security policies, and disseminating experience in applying an integrated approach to its implementation. The workshop will strengthen the management capacity of the participants, deepen a comprehensive understanding of food security and nutrition, and develop the right policy priorities in this area.

# Dealing with Food Loss and Waste: The Example of Germany

By Arthur Rykalin

For 25 years, Germany has systematically addressed the issue of reducing food loss and waste. The study of international experience is especially important for countries that are just beginning to deal with this problem. In this article, ECFS researcher **Arthur Rykalin**, based on a research project with the [Thünen Institute](#) (Germany), talks about methods of saving edible food in Germany and gives examples of initiatives that are being implemented in Russia in the field of reducing food loss and waste.

The amount of global food waste [is estimated](#) at 1.3 billion tons, and the number of hungry people is 821 million people. Food losses lead to the irrational use of natural and labor resources necessary for the production of food, as well as intensify the emission of greenhouse gases. It is important to reduce losses throughout the food value chain.

Every year, 18.4 million tons of food are thrown out in Germany—about 82 kilograms per person in Germany per year, or one truck per minute. Twelve million people live below the poverty line (approximately 14.5 percent of the total population). Fourteen percent of total food products are lost during cultivation and harvesting, 14 percent during the processing of products, 14 percent when products are distributed during the retail sale process, 19 percent during wholesale distribution, and 39 percent when consumed by end users.

The corresponding reminder about the loss of products in the form of infographics is displayed on the walls of the Berlin network store of salvaged products [Sirplus](#). Sirplus sells products that are almost at their expiration date from large networks. They are sold at a big discount. Products close to their expiration date are often suitable for food, but not attractive to sell because their appearance is marred, or they are targeted to a specific occasion, such as Christmas, that has passed.

Such shops with products saved for consumers are gaining great popularity. People come to these



Sirplus: Store of salvaged products in Berlin

shops not only for environmental reasons, but also for ethical ones, voting by using their money in a socially responsible business. During three years of the network's operation in Berlin, three Sirplus stores were opened. Support for such projects from both the state and the public shows their great social importance.

To salvage food in Germany, a variety of solutions are utilized. For example, the federal food bank network [Tafel](#) connects those who have perfectly edible, good food they cannot sell with those who do not have enough money to buy food. Today, there are 940 representative offices of this organization throughout Germany—all of them non-profit. Tafel products support more than 1.5 million people, a third of whom are children and young people. It is one of the largest volunteer organizations in Germany, funded by private donations.

Using the [Too Good To Go](#) mobile app, created in Denmark, shops, cafes, and restaurants can sell perfectly edible, unsold food at a discount. Restaurants receive advertising and cash compensation for expiring products, and customers purchase food and prepared food at a reduced price. The application has 7.6 million users in Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, and Switzerland. In Germany, Too Good To Go has been active for two

years, and people from 300 cities use the application, most actively in Berlin and Hamburg.

The German [Foodsharing project](#) links food donors with food rescuers. The organization's activists work directly—not through food banks—and promptly distribute surplus food to those in need.

In Russia, there is still no systematic plan to reduce food loss and waste, but there are separate initiatives. In 2012 [the All-Russian Charity Foundation Foodbank Rus](#) was created. This organization coordinates with major Russian producers of consumer goods, which—on an ongoing basis—offer their products to the Foundation. Then, with the help of volunteers, food packages are made up; these are

sent to socially unprotected categories of the population throughout the country. The President of Foodbank Rus **Yulia Nazarova** spoke at the Third Eurasian Food Security Conference, which was held in October, 2018, at Lomonosov Moscow State University.

Since 2015, Russia has also been working with the volunteer movement [“Foodsharing. Russia.”](#) The organization's volunteers are engaged in the distribution of suitable products among families in need.

ECFS continues to cooperate with the Thünen Institute in the field of food loss and waste. So, in July 2019, ECFS expert **Alexandra Kosterina** will attend the institute for an internship on this topic.

## Event Calendar 2019/2020

| Date            | City, Country               | Event  |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|--|
| September 10–13 | Leeuwarden, the Netherlands | <a href="#">Saline Futures Conference: Addressing Climate Change and Food Security</a>   |
| September 25–27 | Braunschweig, Germany       | <a href="#">59th GEWISOLA Annual Conference</a>  |
| October 2–3     | Saint-Petersburg, Russia    | <a href="#">International Forum: Eurasian Economic Perspective</a>   |
| October 9–11    | Hannover, Germany           | <a href="#">Extreme Events: Building Climate Resilient Societies</a>   |
| October 16      | Fergana, Uzbekistan         | <a href="#">Current Issues: Soil Science and Agriculture</a> (link in Russian; applications are accepted until September 16, 2019) |
| October 23–24   | Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic    | <a href="#">2019 Life in Kyrgyzstan Conference</a>   |
| October 29–31   | Yerevan, Armenia            | <a href="#">The Eurasian Food Security Conference 2019</a>   |

|                     |                        |  |
|---------------------|------------------------|--|
| December 5–6        | Sochi,<br>Russia       | World Soil Day–2019 (conference website will be available later)   |
| June 16–19,<br>2020 | Montpellier,<br>France | <a href="#">4th International Conference on Global Food Security Achieving local and global food security: At what costs?</a> (applications are accepted until September 20, 2019) |