

CASE STUDY

FOOD WASTE FIGHTERS: WHAT MOTIVATES PEOPLE TO ENGAGE IN FOOD SHARING?

Karin Schanes • Sigrid Stagl
in Journal of Cleaner Production (under review)

KEYPOINTS

- 5 YEARS** initiative established in Spring 2013
- foodsharing mediated and organized via the online platform foodsharing.at
- based on foodsharing.de, established 2011 in Berlin, Germany
- no monetary transactions
- exclusive reliance on volunteers

foodsharing

ROLES

- FOODSHARER**
sharing excess food amongst each other via the foodsharing platform
- FOODSAVERS**
collecting food surplus from cooperation partners (retailers, restaurants, bakeries, hotels, etc.) in order to (i) use food for self-supply, (ii) re-distribute food to family, friends, neighbours, people in need
- AMBASSADORS**
(‘BotschafterInnen’) are responsible for public relations work and all organizational issues.



METHOD

CASE STUDY

ON FOODSHARING AUSTRIA

16 IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

WITH FOODSAVERS AND AMBASSADORS FROM VIENNA AND GRAZ

MOTIVATIONS

TO ENGAGE IN FOODSHARING

EMOTIONS

The huge amounts of still edible food going to landfill provokes feelings of annoyance, frustration and irritation. Saving and sharing food also creates positive emotions associated with the activity itself i.e. a sense of joy, pleasure and satisfaction from sharing saved food with others.

SOCIAL NETWORK

The majority of foodsavers became involved through their personal connections (family, friends, fellow students, neighbours, people in need) already involved in foodsharing.

COMMUNITY

One motivating factor why people engage is that they like to meet new interesting people and form connections with other savers. Several foodsavers value to be part of a community which provides an opportunity for exchange of ideas, thoughts, recipes and knowledge around food. Others especially like the respectful, considerate and cooperative conduct towards one another.

REWARDS

Whilst a minority mentioned that their engagement in foodsharing was driven primarily by financial necessity or obtaining benefits for oneself, all agreed that it is a pleasure to get access to free food for self-supply. Access to free food is seen as an ‘additional benefit’, ‘goodie’ and ‘reward’ for the work and time they spent for self-supply and/or the common good.

GOALS

- save food from being landfilled
- food (re)distribution
- prevent food surplus creation
- reinvigorate a new consciousness around food
- trigger political action around rules and regulations to foster food redistribution and enhance food waste prevention

IMPACT

