

WASTE IN FIELDS

The first phase of the food supply chain includes those activities strictly linked to farming and production of produces. In this segment the waste and losses are bigger for fresh produces (fruit and vegetables) than those for commodity products that, because of their nature, can be preserved for longer (cereals and legumes). At farm's level, waste and losses can be divided in two categories: 1) produces that are never harvested, and 2) produces that get lost between harvesting and selling.

Produces that don't get harvested get usually buried. This procedure could also be considered a total loss because they go back to the soil as organic material; still, those are losses in terms of human nutrition and in terms of resources such as water, energy, work, chemicals, etc, all used for the production of those same produces.

With regards to Italy, in 2012 about 2,47% of the produces were left in the fields. There are primarily two reasons: there is no economic benefit for the farmer in harvesting the produce because the market price for that produce does not pay the job; or some commercial defects in the produce (too small or too big, damages caused by the weather).