

ghent:



FOODSAVERS GHENT
more than food



Using food surpluses in a social way

In 2013, the City of Ghent launched Ghent en Garde, a food strategy to make a more sustainable food system possible. With this objective, the City of Ghent and the Public Center for Social Welfare (PCSW) created *Foodsavers Ghent*, an initiative with 3 core components.

1. reducing food waste
2. improving access to fresh foods for people in poverty
3. social employment

To accomplish this, Foodsavers Ghent collects food surpluses from supermarkets, depots, auctions and farmers. The collections are redistributed for free through social restaurants and organizations dedicated to poverty reduction. In this way, more fresh and healthy food

reaches people in poverty and the CO₂-emissions that accompany food wastage are significantly reduced. Additionally, people with difficulties finding work are employed to carry out the logistics. By committing to such an activation route, they learn new skills that benefit their further career.

Collect, order, distribute

In a nutshell, Foodsavers Ghent works as follows: Food collected on a certain day is checked that very same day for quality and expiry date. It is then sorted and registered and made ready for transport to the receiving organisations, which occurs the following morning. To collect and distribute food, Foodsavers Ghent uses refrigerated delivery vans and a truck for respectively short and longer routes. In the morning, the chauffeurs deliver the sorted food of the previous day to the organizations responsible for the food's distribution to people in poverty. The chauffeurs also collect food from the donators and return it to the headquarters. Once there, the sorters determine whether or not the food is fit for consumption. With the aid of an electronic agenda and info

signs, they then decide to which organizations the food will go. The products are registered with handheld scanners, giving the employees access to a dashboard on which they instantly see who receives what for each food category, as well as how much food is saved.

		Verwerkt voedsel	
		vandaag	totaal septemk
IN		0.831	47.625
UIT		0.800	46.101
		0.031	1.523

Triple success story

The success of Foodsavers Ghent is threefold and constantly measured: In 2 years, the initiative saved 1000 tons of food. This equals a reduction in CO₂ emission of 2.419 tons. In this way, Foodsavers Ghent greatly contributes to an ecological society and a sustainable food chain.

By working with social employment, Foodsavers Ghent also gives disadvantaged people new opportunities. In 2 years' time, 25 people have been employed by the organization. Logistic assistants are very much sought after on the job market, so the employees gain valuable experience and increase their chances of finding permanent employment.

Finally, Foodsavers Ghent makes a significant difference in terms of poverty reduction. It is evident that the availability of free, healthy and fresh foods is important and that its demand is increasing. With only 9 donators, the organization collected 640 tons of food in 2018 and reached 38.000 people in poverty.



Lessons learned

- 1. Begin with one donator and gradually expand from there.** Against initial expectations, it has become clear that there are much more food surpluses than can be collected. By getting to know who you work with, you can offer food on the basis of demands and people's actual needs. In this way, you also avoid a waste stream of your own.
- 2. Don't underestimate the logistics.** The work is physically very demanding, causing 30 % of the employees to quit. Additionally, their language proficiency is often insufficient or they cannot handle the working conditions. Of the 25 people that have been employed in the past 2 years, only 2 were female. This is an area that needs more investment.
- 3. Keep the service free.** The smaller food distribution organizations don't have the means to financially contribute and would drop out if this were to be demanded of them. They are crucial, however, because such smaller organizations often operate in specific streets and neighborhoods and consequently reach target groups that would otherwise remain under the radar.
- 4. Don't distribute food of which the expiry date has been exceeded,** regardless of whether the food is still consumable. This prevents that people in poverty feel alienated by receiving the 'garbage' that society no longer deems fit.

Technical Manual

Preparation

To reach an initial plan of action, Foodsavers Ghent used several sources of information:

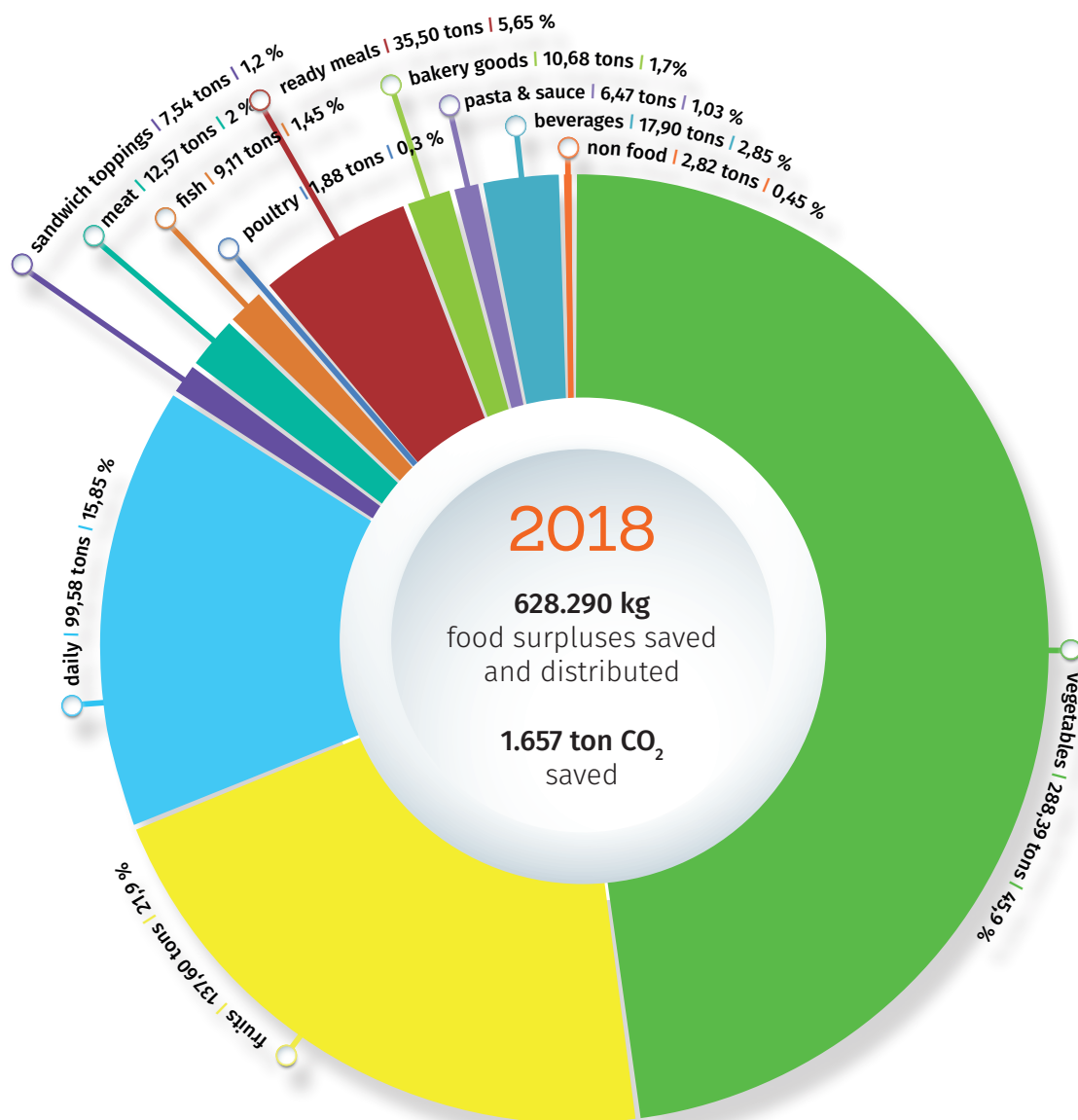
- A study that laid out the operational working of the donors and receivers.
- Research into existing models, such as those of Schenkingsbeurs and Food Act.
- A budget plan and a personal plan of action.



Foodsavers in numbers

In 1 year, the collected food surpluses were processed into

356.000 portions





RESULTS	2017	2018	2017+2018
Tons imported food	300,34	647,52	947,86
Tons exported food	292,93	628,29	921,22
Tons garbage %	7,41 (2,46 %)	19,23 (2,96 %)	26,64 (2,81 %)
Amount of drives (pickups/deliveries)	2.795 1.292/1.503	4.251 1.585/2.666	7.046 2.877/4.169
Amount of times food surpluses were used (paying/non paying)	172.041 70.569/101.472	356.150 60.949/195.201	530.821 231.860/298.961
Amount of unique individuals reached	18.971	38.641	/
Amount of different products	3.748	4.225	/
Total cost	€ 401.831,04	€ 546.564,57	€ 948.395,81
Amount of target employees	19	25	/
Tons reduced CO ₂	762	1.657	2.419

Donors

Foodsavers Ghent works with different types of donors.
An overview of their individual characteristics:

TYPE OF DONOR	CHARACTERISTICS
supermarkets	small amounts large variety a lot of garbage
depots	large amounts small variety little garbage
auctions	a lot of seasonal fruit and vegetables sometimes no or fluctuating supplies

This kind of donor variety is necessary because of the large amount of organizations that receive food through Foodsavers Ghent.

Stores give less amounts of food, but provide a large variety of products.

Conversely, the donations of **depots** are less varied and much bigger in size. This is especially important for the social organizations that take care of hundreds of families. Another advantage of working with depots is that they produce considerably less garbage than the supermarkets.

Auctions are a category in themselves. Their donations are subject to control by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries and other legal provisions. The Department also hands out a mandatory auction pass to the organizations that live up to the terms and conditions. Modest financial support is provided for the collection of food surpluses at the auctions.

Making clear arrangements with the donors is essential. Reliability can be a big obstacle. With this in mind, Foodsavers Ghent concludes a contractual agreement with all involved parties.



Material and provisions

DO's

Use a double cooling with a capacity of 13,80kW between -10° C and $+30^{\circ}$ C. A high cooling capacity is necessary because the refrigeration cell is entered and left very frequently.

Use a divided refrigeration cell. This is an advantage because it clearly demarcates the different work zones.

Make sure that the refrigeration cell is sufficiently spacious. The one used by Foodsavers Ghent became too small very quickly because of the initiative's rapid expansion.

Use a separate refrigeration space for the food that is ready for pick-up by the chauffeurs. This prevents mistakes during the transportation process.

Use an electronic agenda, which instantly displays all information on a large screen. This streamlines the operation.

Make sure your location is sufficiently spacious. At least $1/3^{\text{rd}}$ of the space is used for the storage of thousands of plastic boxes, the parking space for the forklift, the charging point, freezers, pallets, desks, and so on. The 920 m^2 of our headquarters suffices for our purposes.

Install a sufficient amount of lighting in the refrigeration cell. These aren't built to work in for extended periods of times. Foodsavers Ghent expanded the lighting from 2 to 6 luminaires.

Protect the internal and external wall of the refrigeration cell to prevent damage from the pallets during the loading and emptying of the cell. Especially the inner tube is essential to prevent that the bumps from pallets loosen the wall elements from the floor mounting. This would entail a large restoration of the ceiling.

Make sure the floor is sufficiently strong and protected. At Foodsavers Ghent, we installed extra support on the floor. This has proven to be a useful investment.

DONT's

Don't use a cooling system with an internal unit and fans. A refrigeration cell with cooled walls is more user friendly for the people working in it. Fans create a continual stream of cold air, which can cause infected eyes and ears.

A double panic alarm for people who would get stuck in in the refrigeration cell has yet to prove its value. The question could be asked whether or not such an investment is necessary.

Don't use flaps in the refrigeration cell. Air curtains are more hygienic and aren't bothersome when entering or leaving the cell. They are worth the extra investment.

For the pick-up, don't use small delivery vans. Opt for a truck with a dock leveler. This makes the loading process significantly easier because it allows you to load fully loaded pallets instead of having to manually load individual boxes.

Don't use thermoboxes for large deliveries. They are not efficient, although they can provide a solution for small deliveries.

Logistics platform

The headquarters of Foodsavers Ghent has the following facilities:

01.



At the center of the building there is an Isocab refrigeration cell of 16 x 8 x 2,4 meters, divided into two equal parts. There are three sliding doors, two exterior doors and one door inside.

02.

The refrigeration cell has LED-lamps. There are 2 luminaires for every regular part of the cell. The part where the sorting happens has 6 luminaires. Every luminaire: 1572mm/30W/3150 lumen.

03.



The refrigeration cell has 3 air curtains at the doors, model ACA-E-B-S, type B including circulation of ambient air. The air curtains are installed just above the doors in the refrigeration cell.

04.

A Carel ColdWatch is installed in the refrigeration cell. With this system in place, people who would get caught up in the cell can emit an alarm signal. By pressing the emergency button, an acoustic and visual (light) signal is activated. The system is equipped with a back-up battery in case of power failure.

05.



For each half, the refrigeration cell has an individual cooling unit. These have the following characteristics:

- a. Condensing unit: external unit, condensing unit GEA BOCK type 'SHGX44e/475-4 L'.
- b. Refrigerant: R134&
- c. Electrical supply: 400/3/50Hz
- d. Cooling capacity: 13.80kW bij -10° C / +30° C

06. There are two condenser fans, equipped with an oil pump and an evaporator with an indoor unit.

07.



One half of the refrigeration cell is kept at a temperature of 2-4° C and is mainly meant for the food of the supermarkets and depots. The other half has a temperature of 4-7° C and is filled mainly with vegetables. The refrigeration cell is equipped with a fridge so that the employees can wash their hands before handling the food.

08.



The floor is enforced with a load distribution plate. The floor panel has a wooden insert of 15 mm and an aluminum chequer plate.

09.



Two refrigerated light trucks.

- a. fuel: natural gas/ petrol (RON95)
- b. roadworthy vehicle: 2610 kg, maximum total weight: 3.500 kg, maximum load: 690 kg.

10.



One refrigerated truck.

- a. fuel: diesel
- b. roadworthy vehicle: 2.000 kg maximum total weight: 3.500 kg, maximum load: 1500 kg

11.



One refrigerated truck.

- a. fuel: diesel
- b. roadworthy vehicle:
 - 6005 kg;
 - maximum total weight: 19.705 kg;
 - maximum load: 13.700 kg;
 - payload: 7.500 kg

12.



One forklift

- a. DOOSAN B24X-7, electrical (a combustion engine is not permitted)
- b. 80V
- c. Unloaden weight without battery: 3.195 kg; weight with battery: 4.755 kg.
- d. Lifting power without equipment with vertical mast: 2.250 kg with equipment with vertical mast: 2.500 kg, maximum load: 1.300 kg

13. 5 manual powered pallets, loading capacity 1.500 kg.

14.



4.800 plastic boxes with three sizes: 60 x 40 x 10 x 15/30cm.

15.



30 isotherm boxes with freezing unit for refrigerated transport.

16. A meat slicer.

17.



A wrapper to wind loaded pallets with plastic.

18. 6 freezers, 1 quick freezer

19. 1 vacuum device

20.



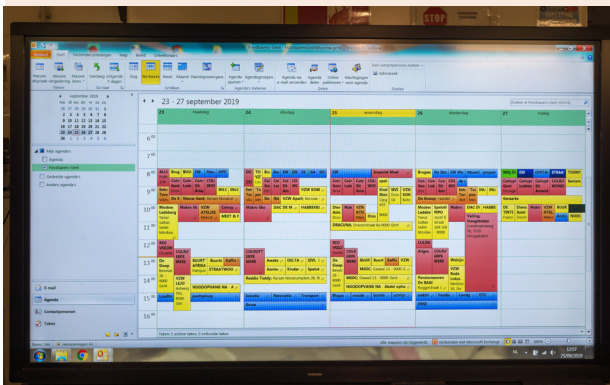
4 small scales
1 scale for pallets

21.



2 info screens

22.



1 large television screen
for the electronic agenda

23.



5 hand scanners

24. 8 laptops (1 of which a waterproof IP67), 1 regular printer, 1 label printer

25. Thermal clothing for 30 people

Legislation in Belgium

The legal requirements in Belgium are very expensive. The law is tailored to the normal economy, not the social economy. Complying with all stipulations is a complex, demanding and costly affair. In the case of Foodsavers Ghent, this entails

- 1 the VAT on donated goods
- 2 the European legislation regarding the donations of the REO Auction
- 3 the demands of the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries
- 4 the food safety legislation of the FASFC (Federal Agency of the Safety of the Food Chain)

Alterations are currently in the making and the FASFC already employs simpler rules for social purposes, but this does not solve the problem of excessive administration. The automatization of the registration and administration is almost a must but demands a considerable investment. Foodsavers Ghent ordered the development of custom made software and a dashboard to simplify the administrative process. As a result, at least one less person is needed for the administration.

Legally, the delivery documents are the import documents of the donating organization. Because Foodsavers Ghent drafts these in a detailed way and as per the legal requirements, they can also serve as the administrative document for the inspection. Because of this, the organizations have no additional administrative burdens. In exchange, the social organizations report every week how many people in poverty made use of the donated food. This is also required by law.

Moreover, every social organization contractually agrees to meet the food safety requirements and to only donate food to people in poverty. The contract also stipulates that Foodsavers Ghent may perform inspections to check if the organizations live up to their agreements. In exchange, Foodsavers Ghent guarantees access to checked, fresh food surpluses, before expiry date.

Contact info



✉ FoodsaversGent@ocmw.gent

☎ +32 9 266 97 97

Dienstenbedrijf Sociale Economie (DBSE) – OCMW Gent

Maisstraat 142 - 9000 Gent

🌐 www.foodsavers.gent

DIENSTENBEDRIJF SOCIALE ECONOMIE

✉ dienstenbedrijfsocialeconomie@gent.be

☎ +32 9 266 97 97

Maisstraat 142 - 9000 Gent

🌐 www.ocmwgent.be/OCMW/Opleiding-en-werk/Opleiding-en-werk-Werkervaring-opdoen/Dienstenbedrijf-Sociale-Economie.html

HERWIN vzw

Social circular entrepreneurs

✉ karen@herwin.be

☎ +32 9 259 97 66

Koning Albertlaan 124 - 9000 Gent

🌐 www.herwin.be

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES

Aranka Delombaerde (coordinator interventions fruit and vegetables)

✉ interventie-GF@lv.vlaanderen.be

☎ +32 2 552 79 40 - 📠 +32 493 31 69 38

Koning Albert II-laan 35 bus 40 - BE-1030 Brussel

🌐 www.vlaanderen.be/landbouw

FEDERAAL AGENSCHAP VOOR DE VEILIGHEID VAN DE VOEDSELKETEN (FAVV)

🌐 www.afsca.be/

DIENST MILIEU EN KLIMAAT

✉ info@gentklimaatstad.be

☎ +32 9 268 23 00

Botermarkt 1 - 9000 Gent

MEER INFO

🌐 www.foodsavers.be

🌐 gentengarde.stad.gent/

🌐 www.ocmwgent.be/

🌐 www.youtube.com/watch?v=X5R9bafwpZA (How does Foodsavers work/video)





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