

In the European Union there is an obligation to label food with information on shelf life: the date of minimum durability, shelf-life date and information on storage conditions (if relevant). The information provided on the labels is intended to serve consumers by providing them with information about food products. Although consumers declare interest in the information contained on the labels, their knowledge is inadequate. It is believed that the presence of shelf life-related information on food packaging can contribute to food waste by selecting products when purchased (buyers prefer products with a longer remained shelf-life compared to similar products) and throwing out high-quality food (due to lack of attention, misunderstanding or excessive health concern). According to the FAO, one-third of world food production is wasted, i.e. 1.3 billion tons. Every year the European Union countries waste almost 90 million tons of food (about 173 kg per person), which is about 20% of food production in the EU. Half of this amount is wasted in households. In the light of the above facts and the lack of comprehensive information on the awareness of Polish consumers, a topic was addressed to explain how shelf life labelling of food affects consumers' behavior and their tendency to waste food products.

The authors intend to answer the following questions:

- How do consumers decide whether a product is fit for consumption?
- How does the information on the packaging influence the consumer's suitability for consumption?
- Do consumers trust food labels or their own senses when assessing fitness for consumption?
- What is the role in premature food discarding concern on the consumption of an outdated foodstuff?
- Which elements of the label are incomprehensible to consumers, which can contribute to discarding high-quality food?
- How do consumers perceive perishable food products or with extended shelf life?
- How do food producers evaluate existing legislation, what difficulties do they face in relation to the obligation to label food?
- Is it possible to reduce the mass of wasted food by increasing consumer awareness?

The research process will have a multi-stage character, covering research conducted in food-producing enterprises and with individual consumers. In addition to the use of traditional methods such as individual direct questionnaire interview and individual in-depth (IDI) interview, research will be carried out using neuromarketing techniques (eye-tracking) and consumer sensory tests. The use of a wide range of research methods together with the interdisciplinary approach of the scientific team will allow for a comprehensive and multidimensional analysis of the problems under investigation. Due to conducted research new scientific knowledge will be acquired. The project will affect the development of the discipline of economics, and mainly the behavior of consumers on the food market and market communication with particular attention to the labelling of food products. The results will be published in scientific journals and presented during scientific conferences. Product labelling solutions that would have a significant impact on consumer awareness of reducing food waste will also be developed.