

## Innovative packaging can play a key role to reduce food waste: Dr. Nina McGrath

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Dr. Nina McGrath, Senior Manager for Food Safety at EUFIC, explained why packaging technology holds great potential to reduce food waste at the latest Public Policy Exchange Symposium in Brussels.

On July 5 policy makers, academics, industry experts, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other key stakeholders gathered for a symposium on 'Tackling Food Waste in the EU: Fostering Efficiency along the Supply Chain' to review the EU strategy on food waste and discuss behavioural, social and technological solutions aimed at promoting improved food waste management. The event organized by Public Policy Exchange allowed the participants to assess the current challenges to the transition towards increased efficiency along the food supply chain, consider ways to overcome them, set future priorities and share best practice and initiatives from across Europe.

Dr. Nina McGrath, Senior Manager for Food Safety at EUFIC, looking at how producers and retailers can improve efficiency across the food chain, presented an overview on food waste data today and shared her experience on the potential of innovative materials to extend shelf life:

- We waste a third of the food globally produced, half of which at the consumption level. At the same time, 2 billion of us are malnourished, 815 million chronically hungry. The math is clear: with 50% less waste, 15% more food becomes available – enough to feed those in need.
- Horizon 2020 funded projects [NanoPack](#), [RefuCoat](#) and [YPACK](#) are developing innovative active food packaging materials that will extend food shelf life by up to 25% and contribute towards reducing the staggering 1.3 billion tonnes of food waste per year.
- There is a trend towards developing bio-based, biodegradable or and compostable packaging materials that make use of waste or by-products while simultaneously reducing landfill waste.

“Science offers amazing tools, but it is up to us to put them to use, as the researchers from NanoPack, RefuCoat and YPACK are demonstrating now as part of the global fight against food waste” McGrath stated in her presentation.