

Consequences of Food Waste: The Role of Internal Attribution and Guilt

Ada Maria Barone

Aarhus University

Matteo De Angelis

Luiss University

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Abstract

This research investigates how consumers' perceptions of responsibility for a food waste event affect their emotional and behavioral reactions toward it. Specifically, the paper advances the idea that consumers who feel responsible for a food waste event have a higher tendency to subsequently engage in compensatory behaviors compared to consumers who do not feel responsible. The findings from four experiments reveal that consumers who feel responsible for a food waste event are more likely to reduce food waste in the future, are more likely to engage in recycling behaviors and tend to share information that promotes the reduction of food waste. The results underscore that feelings of guilt in relation to the food waste event drive these effects. These findings theoretically bolster our understanding of consumers' food waste behaviors, as well as provide implications for marketing and public policy initiatives aimed at reducing food waste.

Keywords: *Food waste; Compensatory behaviours; Attribution*

Track: Consumer Behaviour