The Business Case for Getting Started with the Global Farm Loss Tool

World Wildlife Fund (WWF) has developed—alongside the Consumer Goods Forum, World Resources Institute, WRAP-UK, Lyncros, and others—a new, simplified Global Farm Loss Tool (GFLT) **for growers of all sizes and crop types to easily measure and manage on-farm food losses**. In doing so, the GFLT helps growers understand and communicate what is being left behind in-field or at further stages (processing, storage, etc.) and why. It also helps them partner with their buyers to **develop new channels and solutions to sell more of what they grow**. Over time, collecting better data can improve growers' profitability, get more of what is produced to people as it was intended, and reduce the footprint of food.

This GFLT was developed in response to WWF's **Driven to Waste** report, which found food loss on farms to be approximately 15% of food produced globally, contributing significantly to greenhouse gas emissions and the land use of agriculture. The GFLT aims to harmonize various regional on-farm food loss tools into one globally applicable tool, which can deliver actionable insights into addressing food loss, its drivers, and associated impacts, such as scope 3 emissions.

Why Use the Global Farm Loss Tool?

Using the GFLT provides the necessary data to first **measure and then manage on-farm food loss**. The measurement process is simple and **produces on-farm loss estimates in three actionable categories** for growers and buyers to identify the drivers of what's left unsold and potential solutions:

1. **MARKETABLE** ▶ marketable surplus that meets buyers' current quality specifications but may have been left in-field or otherwise unsold due to harvesting practices, including lack of buyers/market access, insufficient labor, and cold chain storage.

2. **EDIBLE/NOT MARKETABLE** ▶ product that's suitable for human consumption but there was excess or it did not meet existing quality specifications but could be sold, or donated, via secondary channels to motivated buyers and partners.

3. **SPOILED** ▶ product that's no longer considered fit for human consumption due, for example, to weather or pest damage, but could potentially be used in other circular pathways, including being fed to animals, composted, or used for bio-based materials/processing.

For growers, this data can then be used to:

- **Develop new operational efficiencies** and more sustainable practices (where to focus in-field training, optimize the use of inputs, reduce in-field spoilage of lost product to prevent pests, and adjust production practices)
- **Create new circular uses and revenue channels for their surplus** (such as processed/upcycled/frozen or imperfect products) with marketing/sales teams and buyers (for example, using inedible surplus as compost to offset fertilizer usage)

For buyers, it can additionally be used to:

- **Report and demonstrate progress** against existing food loss and waste commitments and initiatives (such as 10x20x30)
- **Estimate and mitigate upstream scope 3 emissions** associated with food loss (per the Science Based Target Initiative's Forest, Land and Agriculture guidance)

How to Get Started

If you are a ...

- **GROWER:** Sign up as a grower in the GFLT. Growers are either farmers or their partners who are collecting on-farm loss data directly from their farm operations. Growers can access the tool for free at **www.globalfarmlosstool.org**.
- **BUYER:** Sign up as an aggregator in the GFLT. Aggregator accounts are typically meant for buyers (brands, retailers, etc.) who won't be entering data about on-farm losses, but rather receive and analyze it from multiple growers in their supply chains. To get started, buyers must first create an aggregator account and be approved by the GFLT by registering at **www.globalfarmlosstool.org**. Once they are approved, their growers will then be able to select them from a drop-down menu of approved aggregators on their dashboard to securely share their on-farm loss entries.

You can learn more about how to use the tool through this **online video**. For directions on how to measure loss and to find more detailed definitions and explanations of the tool, you can use the **Guidance Manual**.

Visit the Global Farm Loss Tool homepage **here**.

Blog series on the tool:

- **Blog 1**: New CGF and WWF Partnership Taking the Lead on Reducing Farm Loss to Help Shrink Footprint of Food
- **Blog 2**: A Global Farm Loss Tool Grounded in Measurement
- **Blog 3**: Global Farm Loss Tool: A Solution to Empower Growers

Grower Testimonials and Success Stories

Testimonials from Consumer Goods Forum members and their growers

▶ Video: WWF and partners at the Consumer Goods Forum talk about the beta-testing and launch of the Global Farm Loss Tool in Spring 2024.

Initiating new internal conversations about new production efficiencies and marketing opportunities

- "Farm operations manager … was very interested in the marketable produce that was left … focused on crew performance … spot checking for efficiency reasons."
- "Reveals that it's not a result of how someone performed, but a reflection of external conditions [such as weather or the market]."
- "The biggest reason [to use the Global Farm Loss Tool] is to find out if we have anything marketable still out there. Unfortunately, 90% of the time we are selling our crops against a loss, so if we have an opportunity to reduce the financial losses and increase revenue even if only by 1% or 2% ... that can make a big difference."

Having data-driven conversations with buyers to explore new sales channels for surplus

- "When you find waste, it brings new opportunities for innovation and profit."
- "By having this data and documented reasons for why the product gets left behind, we have evidence and the confidence to have the conversation."
- "Not [usually] focused [on unharvested product] beyond what's marketable. That could change if there's an economic incentive to do so."
- "Food that's rejected by some customers … there are other customers available [that are] fine with [it] (like schools)."

Success Stories

- Algoma Orchards achieved a 0.6% level of waste across their apple production by measuring and closely partnering with a buyer to develop new products for their surplus (premium, bagged, imperfect, volume discounted bins, etc.).
- A **collaborative project** among WWF, two strawberry growers, one packer/supplier, and three retailers identified key waste hotspots across the US strawberry supply chain and has initiated efforts to develop a new "snacker" product for smaller strawberries (that would have previously been off-grade), new innovative contracting partnerships between buyers and growers, and secondary fresh channels for food service.