

Renewables and consumer choices key to sustainable energy use in EU's food sector

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A report analysing the use of energy in the EU food industry finds that the share of renewable remains relatively small (7%) when compared to its part in the overall energy mix (15%). Progress in the decarbonisation of the food sector is challenging: while farmers and industry have made relevant efforts to improve their energy profile, consumers can also play their part by reducing meat consumption, buying locally and seasonally, and reducing food waste.

By analysing the energy content of a typical 'European [food](#) basket' composed of 17 largely consumed food [products](#), the [report](#) provides an estimate of the amount of energy needed to cultivate, process, pack and bring food to European citizens' tables. The food basket is based on data from EU-27 in 2013 (when data for Croatia who joined the same year were not available) and accounts for about 60% of EU food consumption. The energy required to ensure food supply in the EU amounted to around 26 % of the EU's final energy consumption in 2013. In the report, different solutions are discussed on how to lower this figure and to make it more sustainable by increasing the renewable energy share.

European farmers are already leading the way to improve the energy profile in agricultural productions, while the food industry has shown several examples of very effective energy saving and renewable energy implementation. Consumers can also play an important role when choosing their food: reducing their energy 'food print' includes reducing consumption of meat and animal-related products, buying locally and

seasonally, as well as reducing food waste and choosing organic food when possible. Different food products need very different amounts of energy depending on their nature, their origin and the kind of processing they require. Refined food and products of animal origin generally need much more [energy](#) than vegetables, fruit and cereal products.

More information: ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/publication/2015-10-renewables-consumer-choices-key-sustainable

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