

## EIT Food Fight Podcast - Episode 5 - Is there value in food waste.mp3

**Lukxmi Balathasan** [00:00:06] Hello, everyone, and welcome to the Food Fight podcast. I'm Lukxmi Balathasan...

**Matt Eastland** [00:00:10] ...And I'm Matt Eastland...

**Lukxmi Balathasan** [00:00:11] ...And Matt and I are both from EIT Food, which is Europe's leading food innovation initiative. We're working to make the food system more sustainable, healthy and trusted. So over the course of the series, we're inviting guests from all areas of the food industry to talk to us about how we can tackle some of the world's biggest food challenges. Importantly, fight for a better food future.

**Matt Eastland** [00:00:31] Yeah, and today we're continuing with a theme we began in a previous podcast, which is Food Waste. So then we were speaking to Olio and a retailer, Colruyt, to find out about the efforts to stop perfectly edible food going in the bin, including things like food sharing networks and better date labelling on food products. But in this episode, we're asking the question, is there value in food waste? So how can we turn food that would usually be thrown away into useful, valuable products? Lukxmi do you want to explain a little more.

**Lukxmi Balathasan** [00:01:03] Sure. So there is a term used in the food industry called valorization, which basically means a process of converting something that would usually be classed as waste into something of value. So we're mostly talking about processes that happen before food even reaches the consumer. So in a food production line it might be off cuts or extras.

**Matt Eastland** [00:01:24] So these are things like fruits and veg with wonky edges.

**Lukxmi Balathasan** [00:01:27] Absolutely. Or even surplus of a product that is under ordered and doesn't make it into shops.

**Matt Eastland** [00:01:34] So you take these unused bits and essentially up cycle them into something useful, is that right?

**Lukxmi Balathasan** [00:01:39] Yes, and it's a great way to reduce the amount going to landfill and as a bonus, you make money.

**Matt Eastland** [00:01:44] So good for the planet and potentially good for business, too then.

**Lukxmi Balathasan** [00:01:48] Absolutely. But to make this work, you do have to be quite inventive.

**Matt Eastland** [00:01:53] Yes, indeed. And inventive is exactly what our guests are today. So in the studio, I'm very excited to welcome Rob Wilson, who's the CEO of Toast Ale, an award winning craft beer made with surplus fresh bread that would otherwise be wasted. Rob, welcome to the food fight.

**Rob Wilson (Toast Ale)** [00:02:07] Cheers. Thanks for having me.

**Lukxmi Balathasan** [00:02:08] And joining us over Skype, all the way, from Zurich, I'd like to extend a very warm welcome to Linda Grieder. She's the founder and CEO of Rethink Resource, a company that's created an online marketplace where producers and processing businesses can trade their side and waste streams. Hello, Linda. Thanks for being here today.

**Linda Grieder (Rethink Resource)** [00:02:27] Hello. Thank you very much for having me.

**Lukxmi Balathasan** [00:02:29] So, Rob and Linda, before we get into specific of both your businesses, let's talk about the food waste crisis. So to both of you. Do you think that the public and also the food industry is really aware of the scale of the problem? Maybe, let's start with you Rob.

**Rob Wilson (Toast Ale)** [00:02:45] The industry definitely is. You know, I think everyone that works in the food and drink industry is passionate about their food and drink and understand that there is this catastrophic crisis at hand where one third of the food that we're producing is going to waste. The public, I don't think, are so aware. Typically, we're quite blind to this. It's happening in big factories. It's happening behind the scenes. It's not just us as consumers wasting food. It's happening throughout the whole supply chain. And it's the biggest cause of climate change, the food industry. People think of it in isolation. But when you consider the deforestation, the energy usage, the transportation, when one third goes to waste, there's such an efficiency issue there that you can tackle it so tangible. And so I think if the public were more aware of this, it would be quite refreshing to see that there's actually quite a tangible solution for us to solve when it comes to the catastrophic consequences of climate change.

**Matt Eastland** [00:03:45] And that's really interesting. I mean, it's a huge issue, obviously. I mean, Linda, from your perspective, you obviously work with a lot of food manufacturers. Do you think you agree with Rob? Do you think that as fully aware as that?

**Linda Grieder (Rethink Resource)** [00:03:57] Yeah, I actually fully agree, and especially like the point Rob made, that the food waste is occurring along the whole value chain or food supply chain, and the consumers are mostly aware of their own waste. So the post-consumer waste, but not the pre-consumer, and I think the industry knows that they do create a lot of waste and side streams. But the consumers are probably not aware that it's not only post consumer waste, but also pre-consumer waste that is adding up a lot of the food waste problem that we have.

**Matt Eastland** [00:04:32] And just briefly, Linda, can you explain what you mean by pre-consumer and post-consumer waste?

**Linda Grieder (Rethink Resource)** [00:04:38] Yes. So with the pre-consumer waste, I refer to all the waste streams that occurred during the processing and the production of our food that we eat. And the post-consumer waste is all the food waste that is occurring after it has been bought by us, the consumers. So occurring at our house, at the retailers, at the bakery shop and so on.

**Matt Eastland** [00:05:05] Okay, cool, thank you. That's super clear. And to both of you again. So you're both founders of your companies and you've made it your mission to lead ventures that target these waste streams. So can you tell me why you were personally drawn into this? Rob, can we start with you?

**Rob Wilson (Toast Ale)** [00:05:22] Absolutely. And I definitely cannot claim the full founder title. The original idea came from a good friend of mine, Tristram Stuart, Tristram's a food waste activist and environmental campaigner, and has arguably done more than anyone really to raise awareness about the issue of food waste, especially connecting it to an environmental issue. I think people previously, I guess, understandably considered food waste to be, people are going hungry, there is food going to waste. Let's connect the dots. People didn't necessarily consider the environmental issue at stake. At the time, I was running an organization called Ashoka that support social entrepreneurs, social enterprises. Tristram was one of the social entrepreneurs that we support. And at the time he had this idea, which was let's start up a beer company where we brew beer using surplus bread, 'let's get wasted on waste'.

**Matt Eastland** [00:06:10] Yeah, I read that.

**Rob Wilson (Toast Ale)** [00:06:11] And yeah, he pretty much had me at that moment. My advice to him was, Tristram, this is such a good idea. I think I should run this. And he said, okay, go on then you egocentric...(laughs). He said, yeah, go, go for it man and a team of four of us from the very beginning got Toast off the ground and. Yeah, in a nutshell, we're on a mission to prove the alternative to food waste is delicious and pint sized. And the worst offender of them all when it comes to food waste is the humble loaf of bread. So 44 percent of the bread that's baked in the UK goes to waste. And when we realized that you could brew a really delicious beer using that bread and in fact, the origins of beer production that date back thousands of years have always had bread in the ingredients up until really the industrial revolution.

**Matt Eastland** [00:07:06] Is that right?

**Rob Wilson (Toast Ale)** [00:07:07] Local bakeries, local breweries would partner up and surplus would be passed on to the brewery. And so I guess we love the whole circular economy nature of what we're doing, but also the circularity of bringing the beer production back to its origins. An element of romance, I guess, in that given the craft beer boom that's happening. And on a brief personal level, I grew up with my dad worked in the fruit and vegetable industry and I saw a huge amount of waste. Growing up, I would earn my pocket money during holidays, picking apples in farms that my dad would set me up with to try and bring in some cash. And just saw how much went to waste. When I was picking these apples and we had these little measures, and if they weren't the right shape or size like you described with the ugly or wonky fruits and vegetables, and it was really Tristram that mainstreamed, the understanding of this concept of wonky and ugly fruits and veg and so that memory and then connecting with Tristram, where he became somewhat of an idol to me, which really started to connect the dots.

**Matt Eastland** [00:08:11] I mean, talking of sort of these industrial processes. I mean, Linda, is this the reason that you set up Rethink Resource?

**Linda Grieder (Rethink Resource)** [00:08:19] Yes and no. So I come from an angle of the circular industry. I actually have a completely different background. I am a legal practitioner by training. So my family, however, was always involved in industrial production so that could be from the food or the textiles industry or some others as well. And I have always been in contact with industrial scale production. And when I got engaged with the whole topic of circular economy already during my studies of law, I specialized in IP law and therefore also technology and industry was always very important for me. And I then joined the World Circular Economy Forum one year and I

realized that there was no representative of the industry and I didn't understand because for me, circular economy was all about the industry recirculating their side streams and using unused potential, kind of, becoming more efficient, connecting sustainability with profitability and so on. And I was wondering why is nobody here from industry? And then I started to dig into that topic and realized that there is something missing. And that's the reason why I set up Rethink Resource.

**Matt Eastland** [00:09:48] Amazing love that. Thank you.

**Lukxmi Balathasan** [00:09:49] And I guess going back to you, Rob. So, you go by the title of Chief Toaster.

**Rob Wilson (Toast Ale)** [00:09:56] Back to that egocentric title (laughs).

**Lukxmi Balathasan** [00:09:59] It would be really great if you can tell us a little bit about where that title comes from, and actually a little bit more about how you actually make your beer in the process.

**Rob Wilson (Toast Ale)** [00:10:07] Yeah. So I guess hopefully that title doesn't make me sound too much of a plonker. And it comes from, I guess, a good sense of humour that we have in the business. We do believe that, you know, saving this planet should be something that we celebrate. We approach everything that we do with a fun celebratory tone. So we built the business on four core principles. Number one really freaking delicious beer. Like it's gotta serve the purpose that a consumer wants when they go into a bar or a restaurant or a supermarket. Buying a beer, gotta be a good beer. And we've won international awards for the beer. It's fantastic. We blind taste tested and we win gold medals. It's great. But number two, three and four, I guess, are the cuddly principles behind the business. And number two is trying to eliminate commercial bread waste. So we open sourced our recipe. That's been downloaded about 50000 times so far. We've collaborated with breweries all around the world. We're really trying to see the entire beer industry be a part of solving this issue with us. We're not, I guess, trying to focus just on the Toast brand trying to achieve this on its own. We want to see a systemic change. But number three, like I said, we want to communicate about food waste in a fun, accessible way. So, yeah, back to sort of chief Toaster, I'm the CEO, but we're trying to be fun as a business and approach everything, I guess quite light-heartedly. Even though it's such an urgent, serious issue that we face. And so we communicate about some of these facts and stats around food waste. We put those on our bottles and our cans. And we hope we can lubricate some good conversations over beer. And then the fourth thing, we pour 100 percent of our profits into environmental charities. So it makes us the best thing since you know what?

**Matt Eastland** [00:11:58] Sliced bread. So it's really interesting. So basically, you mean as a startup, I imagine a lot of startups are quite concerned about their IP.

**Rob Wilson (Toast Ale)** [00:12:05] Yeah.

**Matt Eastland** [00:12:05] You know, people really knowing everything they're doing so it can be copied. But that's obviously not what you're worried about.

**Rob Wilson (Toast Ale)** [00:12:10] No, I guess our IP ultimately is in the brand. The IP behind beer production, like I said, it's an ancient concept to use surplus bread in beer production. So we replace one third of the malted barley with surplus bread that would

otherwise go to waste and that you're getting the carbohydrates and the sugars from, that you're mashing in that's converting to alcohols. And so, yeah, I guess that's sort of the process that we go through.

**Lukxmi Balathanan** [00:12:42] Do you use all sorts, of types of bread?

**Rob Wilson (Toast Ale)** [00:12:43] We. Yeah, I guess. I mean, similar to Linda sort of talking about the sort of industrial scale nature of this, I'd love to have a romantic story where I'm on a pedal bike going to artisanal bakeries and getting sour doughs and baguettes and rye breads. And it's all, you know, lovely and local. The reality is that bread waste is happening at such an industrial scale that we get most of our bread from the sandwich industry where the end slice, the heel of a loaf of bread, is surplus to requirements and never ends up on your pre-packaged sandwich in a shop. So we get all of those crusts that would otherwise just be chucked out, before they become waste, whilst they're still surplus and back to the kind of value of food. It's a really important issue in food waste and food surplus to define the difference. So surplus is before it becomes waste. And so we're taking that surplus bread before it's chucked out, before it's in a bin, before it is waste and we're brewing it up. And the reality is we're using that bread whilst it's still almost day fresh, often, like it'll be baked in the morning, delivered to the brewery in the afternoon, the bakery will bring it to the brewery for free because it's cheaper for them to give it to us than it is to pay to dispose of it as commercial waste. But another like tangible thing to realize where waste happens. You imagine cutting up a loaf of bread on your bread board at home and the amount of crumbs that come off. Every slice you cut, you imagine all the sliced loaves that exist in all the supermarkets in this country and around the world. Every time they are sliced, there are crumbs created. Now one single sandwich or one single bread loaf line that's got a slicer will probably create about three to five tons of crumb every single week. And so that's the sort of thing that, again, that kind of pre-consumer sort of waste that we're talking about. You wouldn't even think of, and obviously when you're home and you see that waste, but when that's scaled up by tens of millions of times, you can imagine, yeah, that's a lot of crumb and that's a tiny fraction of where the waste is happening. So, yeah, there's all this surplus happening along the supply chain that we are super eager to tackle and believe that the beer industry can play a pivotal role in tackling them.

**Lukxmi Balathanan** [00:14:57] That's incredible. I had no idea.

**Matt Eastland** [00:14:59] Me neither. Yeah. That's amazing. And so I guess going from like that specific focus on bread, which Rob you do. So, Linda, my assumption is that what you do at Rethink Resource goes even wider. You look at many other sort of surplus food waste, is that right?

**Linda Grieder (Rethink Resource)** [00:15:15] Right. Correct. Yes. And actually I also loved the terms you use, Rob, with surplus. And we also try to eliminate the word waste because that's also maybe coming back to the title of this podcast, 'Is there value in food waste', because we want to see the value. We want to recognize that value and we don't want to call it waste because in waste there's probably no high value. But these surplus food materials, they really do carry a lot of important value and also, nutritious value for us human beings. And we're just throwing them away until now. So, yes, I do see a lot of different side streams really. Is it in fruits, vegetables, also bakery. But also chocolate, beer. I mean, also the beer industry does have a very interesting side stream actually, that spent grain. I have worked a lot with spent grain as well. And I mean if you can use side stream for the beer industry and then use the side stream of the beer industry for another

product, again, it really shows that the materials are starting to circulate and that kind of networks are emerging where material is reused and repurposed. And and this is what we are working on, yes.

**Matt Eastland** [00:16:42] Okay, great. And can you explain for our listeners exactly what your platform is? So you call it Circado. But you know, what is that exactly? How does it work?

**Linda Grieder (Rethink Resource)** [00:16:52] Yes. So Circado actually comes from Circular and 'mercadeo', which is the name for market in Spanish. And so it's supposed to be a circular market. And what we do is, it offers the industry a kind of a trading platform that is also offering a matchmaking mechanism so that we can connect different companies or different industries already that can reuse in others side streams. So, for example, there's a cosmetic producer on our platform and asking for some ingredients that he can use as a replacement for plastic beans, for exfoliants for body scrubs. And, but he probably doesn't know at that moment, what it could be and what our platform then does is it screens our database of registered side streams and gives him an output of possible matches. And for that example, it could either be, for example, nut shells or raspberry seeds or so anything similar.

**Matt Eastland** [00:18:09] Sorry, raspberry seeds?

**Linda Grieder (Rethink Resource)** [00:18:11] Yes. Yes.

**Matt Eastland** [00:18:12] Is that a big food surplus?

**Linda Grieder (Rethink Resource)** [00:18:14] That is a huge food surplus. Yeah. Actually, I don't know how you like your your jam in the morning.

**Matt Eastland** [00:18:22] Just lots of it generally.

**Linda Grieder (Rethink Resource)** [00:18:24] Yeah. And are there seeds in there?

**Matt Eastland** [00:18:28] You know what? I don't think there are.

**Linda Grieder (Rethink Resource)** [00:18:31] Yeah. Because most companies actually take them out in order to make the jam very smooth and they're like, hundreds and thousands of tons of raspberry seeds that we're dealing with.

**Rob Wilson (Toast Ale)** [00:18:45] What are companies using them for, Linda?

**Linda Grieder (Rethink Resource)** [00:18:47] Yeah, actually the example I gave you now with exfoliants for the cosmetic industry is actually actually happening. So that is one of the usages, they're trying now. But actually until now, some of them have been washed down the drain because it was too expensive to incinerate or something similar. And it was cheapest to just wash it down. But also, it also carries a lot of potential for actually flavours or pigments because they're still the colour and the taste in these seeds. So our platform is there. And hopefully in order to match people that are looking for something with this potential, that industry's meet or companies meet that probably would not have met otherwise.

**Matt Eastland** [00:19:36] OK. That's amazing. I mean, can I just ask one last question on that, Linda? So you're probably the best person to be able to say, you know, what kind of surplus foods are going through? So what are the biggest? Well, you know, what's the kind of the greatest amount of types of foodstuffs that you see on your platform?

**Linda Grieder (Rethink Resource)** [00:19:56] So actually, the biggest amounts are, dry bulk resources, meaning bran or rice husks or chocolate husks, things like these, it's absolutely insane what kind of quantities we're talking about and the difficulty there is that these side streams occur very regular and for up cycling solution or side streams valorization solution this is actually a very big challenge, to find something that can take up all of these amounts. And this is also something where our platform tries to help with, you know, either pulling together small, small amounts of side streams for one big company that wants to take up a huge amount or actually splitting a big side stream to many smaller and different processors that can take up the material.

**Lukxmi Balathasan** [00:20:57] And, picking up from something that you've said about spent grains, Rob it would be really interesting to hear what you do with your spent grains.

**Rob Wilson (Toast Ale)** [00:21:07] Yeah, yeah. Yeah. So all of our spent grain goes into animal feed. So yeah. Where we brew actually on a farm in Yorkshire and all of the power for the farm comes from an onsite wind farm. All of the water that we use comes from a local borehole. All of the grain and barley that we use comes from the surrounding fields. And then the spent grain goes back into the cattle grazing in the fields as well. So we try and be as circular as possible. The best thing you can do with spent grain is try and repurpose that into human consumption. So the food waste pyramid, the best thing you can do with food that's being created for human purpose is to feed it to people. And so there's a really cool project called ReGrained in the US that reprocesses surplus spent grain into flour. And so you can then, you can actually, we've baked loaves of bread in that way and then we've had lots of fun. So we've kind of ended up creating beer breads from our beer and turning the spent grain into bread. And we call it the 'circle of loaf' and people love it. And it blows people's minds, you've got this kind of constant evolution of beer and bread and it just never ends. Obviously, if you consume it at some stage it ends and I think people don't quite understand that you can see a lot of value and also in a similar way to processing spent grain into flour. One of the most interesting things that people may not be aware of that you can do with surplus bread is actually just dry that and reprocess that back into flour and then create another loaf of bread. And so yeah, that's what some bakeries are starting to do, which is very cool.

**Lukxmi Balathasan** [00:22:48] So how has the response from the consumer been about this? Do you think it's a story that's really enticed consumers or is it because you're just creating a delicious product?

**Rob Wilson (Toast Ale)** [00:22:58] I think so. I think it's really captured people's imagination. It's been a bonkers four years, to be honest. So since we started, Jamie Oliver featured us on a TV show he does called 'The Friday Night Feast' with a friend of his Jimmy, Jimmy and Jamie. And that was the kind of start of a whole media circus that kind of took off where we've been on Latin American TV shows and Indian newspapers and Japanese and Korean TV and lots of North American documentaries and things. It's really captured people's imagination, which is great. And we've seen the idea replicated now all around the world. So we have regular requests from people wanting to start their own bread, beer. Woolworth's, a big retail chain in Australia, has copied the idea and done their own bread beer in the UK, M&S and Iceland, the supermarket through their own

label, bread, beer as well. And you know, that's all part of our real enthusiasm for creating systemic change. We want it to become normalised. We want it to, certainly not be an oddity or a potential gimmick that we're using surplus fresh bread in beer production. We want it just to become an absolute norm. But like Linda said, you know, the challenge is, is that supply chain where how can you create the connections, which is what Linda is doing, which is so amazing and awesome at an industrial scale to connect business to business, where in the bread bakery industry you've got, you know, thousands of tons of waste being created daily. And then the brewing industry where thousands of tons of barley and grain are needed daily. But connecting those dots is at the moment, quite often the missing piece. But not when Linda is on the case.

**Lukxmi Balathasan** [00:24:39] Filling that gap.

**Matt Eastland** [00:24:41] So do you both think then from a business perspective that it's going to be, it is worth the effort then? So you know, Rob, you're obviously, you've done great jobs in terms of scaling this up globally. Linda, you're sort of connecting businesses together. But do you get any pushback from people because they just don't think that this is worth their while?

**Linda Grieder (Rethink Resource)** [00:25:02] Actually, not, no. So I think that, on the contrary, they're actually really interested because it does offer an ecological and economical component that can be compared. And I think they have never had that opportunity before. So sustainability has always been kind of a side thing they did in business, and it has never been part of the actual business. And I think that they can really improve their factory or their businesses. Efficiency is a very, very interesting value proposition that they're highly interested in. And I mean, sometimes it is difficult for the industry to invest in such efforts, meaning that they probably have to treat their side streams differently, as Rob referred to before, they don't let it become waste, so they do not throw it in a ton or something, that somehow or sometimes can involve some investment that they need to, you know, keep it food safe or whatever. That has a stint on that. But as soon as they realize what the market potential can be, it actually never led to some kind of a throwback or yeah.

**Matt Eastland** [00:26:22] Okay, great. So businesses are seeing the kind of value in food surplus then. A question that sort of occurs to me when it when we're talking here is does this potentially mask a problem for the consumer? So if consumers think that, you know, there are businesses out there who are processing this food surplus on their behalf, do you think there's ever a worry that consumers might think, 'in which case it doesn't really matter? I can just carry on doing what I'm doing'. Rob?

**Rob Wilson (Toast Ale)** [00:26:51] I guess there's a potential risk. How we mitigate that risk is pouring our profits into a charity called Feedback that campaigns at a systemic level to end food waste. And they're lobbying for consumer behaviour change, retail behaviour change, government policy change. And so that's really important to us, we know as much as we try to hope and believe that beer is the solution to our world's ills, it probably isn't on its own. And so if we can create profits to fund fantastic organizations like Feedback, to do the work that they do, then they can tackle this issue from another angle. And back to your original question before as well. You know, we see huge interest from consumers and business. And I think that the important thing is to create very delicious solutions and avoid any element of, you know, the yuck factor or a potential sort of gimmick factor. It's got to be so normalized and mainstream and palatable and delicious.



**Matt Eastland** [00:27:54] Can I just pick up on something you said? You talked about the yuck factor from consumers. What is that yuck factor? Why is that?

**Rob Wilson (Toast Ale)** [00:28:01] Yeah. So I think that comes back to this issue of surplus or waste. Of course, you know, we are not so ignorant that there isn't sometimes a connotation where people are thinking, 'oh, my goodness, do you mean bread at the back of a bread bin? That's a little bit mouldy.' It's like no there's perfectly good day-fresh bread that goes to waste, all of this surplus that happens at this industrial level. There's an element of education that needs to happen to understand where this surplus is created. You know, there have been examples where people have said, 'I've got a great idea. Maybe you could create this kind of collection scheme where people could send their surplus bread to you'. And it's kind of like 'no, that would be a yuck factor.' We even had a very well-known national pizza brand reach out to us to say, could they use the crusts when people don't eat the crust and they finish their crusts, they finish the pizza, but they've left the crust on the plate. Could we give you the crust to brew? Well, that would probably create a bit of a yuck factor. If we were trying to describe our delicious product was actually brewed using people's leftover crusts on a plate at the end. Now, I personally would have no issue eating someone's crust. But in general, most of the public would find that a bit of a yuck factor. And so I think that's the important issue to try and I guess create a balance with.

**Matt Eastland** [00:29:22] And I'm just yeah, I'm just wondering about how we remove those negative connotations. You're talking about like pizza crusts. How do we avoid that kind of yuck factor from consumers? How do we make sure that they realize that this valuable food surplus is actually something which is still really good for them and still is proper food?

**Rob Wilson (Toast Ale)** [00:29:41] Yeah. Linda. Something, I'll be up for seeing if you're up for doing it over where you are. What we're doing here at Toast and we got a bunch of us like Olio, To Good To Go and Karma and Rubies in the Rubble. Some amazing organizations out there that are fighting food waste. All of us have sort of signed up just individually. It's not a big organized thing, but just individually we're signed up to all of our teams will go a whole week living off food that would otherwise go to waste. In January, we're gonna pick a week and just try and give it a go, but bring all of our families on board as well. So I'm speaking to my little boy about the concept of bin-diving. Probably does create a bit of a yuck factor. My little boy was like, 'Daddy, no, we're not going to dive in a bin'. And I just think that obviously we won't go diving in a bin with my little boy. But I think just that education as well. At a young age to understand and talk about it and embrace it.

**Lukxmi Balathanan** [00:30:31] Oh, I love that. Starting them young. I would love to see it being rolled out in his primary school or day care or nursery.

**Rob Wilson (Toast Ale)** [00:30:38] Yeah, well, he's primary school is great. I think schools are getting much better at talking about these things. His primary school is very encouraging and talking about these issues, which is great. But Linda, are you up for joining us?

**Linda Grieder (Rethink Resource)** [00:30:49] Yeah, absolutely! I think the whole team would be because I mean, we're all into avoiding food waste, also in our private life and also in our office. And we always have lunch together. And it's our purpose for not creating waste during that lunch. So, yes, absolutely! I think we should connect after the podcast and see how our team can join that week.

**Rob Wilson (Toast Ale)** [00:31:16] Hundred percent. I guess just to shamelessly plug, but I really would encourage people to download Olio, download Too Good to Go, download Karma. These are such easy, useful, tangible ways that are win win win, where you know you can go to a local restaurant, buy the lunch a couple of hours after lunchtime is typically served, get a half price meal, you get great food for cheap. They still make some revenue. Food doesn't go to waste. Win, win, win. So I just really encourage it, it's such an easy way to be part of the solution.

**Lukxmi Balathasan** [00:31:47] And, do you think in the near future that this is going to be like the absolute requirement for businesses? That actually circularity is going to be an absolute must as part of their business model?

**Linda Grieder (Rethink Resource)** [00:31:59] I think so. And so I think that they cannot afford to really throw away any more in the future. I mean, also in terms of money, it really is very expensive to throw away your side streams. It's not just easy. It's also very expensive. And I think when we can offer them an easy solution that does not cost them so much money, but actually offers them an interesting business opportunity that increases their factories efficiency, they can not look away from that opportunity anymore and it will become the norm I think. So, Rethink Resource is now active for three years and I think three years ago it had been much more difficult to actually even find someone within the companies being responsible for the these matters. At the moment, more and more companies are putting in place positions that are specifically responsible for either food waste or circular economy or anything related to these topics. And I think that makes our life much more easier. But that also makes the whole topic for the companies much more tangible. So they do have someone responsible for that now. And I also start to realize that within the companies, a lot of people do have a lot of great ideas, but they also have this, you know, that there's this feeling that they want to have this authenticity and this innovation in the company, but them in their position they couldn't change it. But now they have someone to talk to. And that creates kind of a buzz within the companies. And I think that's really interesting to see. And that didn't happen three years ago.

**Matt Eastland** [00:33:51] Okay, it's really great to know that, I mean, big organizations are making this progress. Can we just bring this back down to a real consumer level, I mean, you know, we've actually gone out and we've asked people on social media what other questions you have about this particular topic. And one of them they've asked is, you know, what are the best ways that people in their own homes can make best use of food surplus? Rob, you talked about breadcrumbs, but I imagine for some people they might not do that. What other things can they do?

**Rob Wilson (Toast Ale)** [00:34:20] Yeah. So, yeah, like I said, keeping things in the freezer may well be one smart way to do it. I think not buying so much in the first instance, being very conscious about what you are purchasing. But also use your senses, use your nose, use your eyes. Like so whether something actually is really waste or surplus and like eat it, consume it. Chances are that it might not be beyond its best, even though the date says it is. And so use your senses, trust your senses. I think that's what we also don't do enough. And there is a big issue around date labelling that we need to also wake up to and realize that perfectly good food is chucked out because of understandable misinformation and confusion around it.

**Matt Eastland** [00:35:03] So we're almost out of time, guys. But, you know, looking to the future. So what are the innovations and the solutions that you're seeing now that you're most excited and hopeful about? So Linda, I was wondering if I could start with you.

**Linda Grieder (Rethink Resource)** [00:35:17] It's a good question. I think what I'm absolutely excited about is all the innovations that are creating like, creating products that we really need out of waste and that can really be food, feed, but also like cosmetics or building material, like all the things we need on a daily base that can be made from from side streams, they excite me. And also like you know Rob, that you're not protecting your recipe, but that you're trying to share it and I think all of these new business models and new ways of operating your business are changing our future. And this is what really excites me and it's also keeping me going I think.

**Matt Eastland** [00:36:08] I love that. And Rob, what about you? What are you most excited about?

**Rob Wilson (Toast Ale)** [00:36:12] I think it's maybe, it's not the most sexy side of it. But I think the thing I'm most excited about is just the very fact that we are talking about it, that the awareness is increasing, that there is a much deeper, richer understanding that the food industry has this issue and that we need to tackle it and that it has such catastrophic consequences if we do not tackle it. I'm a big fan of the movement around things like extinction rebellion and raising awareness to consumers about telling the truth. And we do need to tell the truth about what is happening in the food industry. And I think we need to be open and transparent about it. And because it's happening, at such an industrial level, I just think the very fact that like Linda's business model exists is so exciting. The fact that there are now commercial needs for a B2B marketplace is amazing. That's exciting because what we're doing is having a big impact. I think we're reaching a lot of consumers. We're raising some awareness, we're like I said that it captures people's imagination, but we are just scratching the surface. And so the idea of tackling this at an industrial level with redistribution and a marketplace like Linda's created is where the real tangible change can happen. And that's yeah, that's awesome.

**Matt Eastland** [00:37:26] Amazing,.

**Lukxmi Balathasan** [00:37:26] And I guess for me, it would be really interesting to hear, other than Toast Ale, what's your top pick for another company that's doing an amazing job of valorizing and inspiring?

**Rob Wilson (Toast Ale)** [00:37:35] Yeah. So I think ReGrained in California, definitely. So Dan, who founded that, feels like he's a brother from another mother. We've got a lot of love for each other. So we often sort of see each other at events and conferences and things. And we haven't yet formally collaborated, actually, to use some of our surplus spent grain into some of this lab, but we've got to make that happen. They produce these delicious cereal bars as well from the spent grain.

**Linda Grieder (Rethink Resource)** [00:38:00] Amazing. What about you Linda? Any examples of companies that are inspiring yours? I mean interesting products you've seen coming out of your platform?

**Linda Grieder (Rethink Resource)** [00:38:07] Yeah. I mean, the products of our customers are working on that are inspiring me a lot, I can not talk about so much. I mean, there are there are apps like, you know, Too Good To Go that are, I'm a big, big fan of and

using a lot. And I think it's also something that is easy to also, you know, show to our customers. Actually, even though it does not have to do anything with their business and the industrial factor, but it kind of inspires them on a personal level. And often when I'm talking to customers, I'm mentioning apps like Too Good To Go to them and they're like crazy about it. And they're like, next time when I see them, they're like, you know, I tried it and it's really cool and I'm gonna show it to my kids and everything. And, you know, you can like inspire people with things like this. And I think that's a great thing to do, and therefore, I think it's a very, very good example of inspiring people.

**Rob Wilson (Toast Ale)** [00:39:03] Yeah, I think what is quite fun about our sort of our sector, our industry is that we do a lot of shouting about the other success stories and trying to bring people on board. A lot of what we like to talk about are the other businesses, the other brands, the other ones that are cutting through as well. Because we are all definitely part of a much broader movement. And one big family of organizations trying to tackle this issue. And so, so many of us will constantly be referencing each other. It's awesome. It's a really, really collaborative, co-operative movement is happening.

**Lukxmi Balathasan** [00:39:34] I must say, this episode has made me feel quite hopeful about where the future of food is going.

**Matt Eastland** [00:39:39] Yeah absolutely.

**Lukxmi Balathasan** [00:39:39] It's really inspiring. It's been great to chat to you both.

**Matt Eastland** [00:39:42] So. So, yeah. Guys, I think we're right at the end of the show. So I guess we just need to ask, where can people find out more about your work? Linda?

**Linda Grieder (Rethink Resource)** [00:39:51] At our website, rethink-resource.com. You can reach out to us there and you can also find a lot of examples as Rob just said, of other companies that are developing great products out of side streams on our website. You can reach out to them. Just give us a call, also, once you're in Switzerland, maybe, I don't know. We're always happy to have you at our office and talk to everyone who is interested about these ideas and our field, our industry. And yeah.

**Matt Eastland** [00:40:23] Amazing. Thanks, Linda. What about you, Rob? Where can people find out more about Toast Ale?

**Rob Wilson (Toast Ale)** [00:40:28] Yeah, so we are @ToastAle on all of our social media platforms. Please take lots of photos of you enjoying a beer or send us any thoughts that you've got. We love as much interaction as possible on social media and on our website is toastale.com. Now that we all friends I'll share a little cheeky discount code so if you put 'I know Rob' now that we're friends into the discount box, you'll get a nice little promo code.

**Lukxmi Balathasan** [00:40:53] All one word?

**Rob Wilson (Toast Ale)** [00:40:55] Yeah if you want to buy the beer. And actually just to say, I think. Yes. Be hopeful because there are good things happening. It is so important to emphasize and not to belittle what I'm doing or Linda is doing, but it's still small scale compared to this huge industrial issue that we face. And so I think back to what you said around, like the complacency of consumerism, like I definitely don't people listen to this podcast and think, oh, great, everything's great because it isn't. There's so much still to do and we all need to be a part of it. We all can be a part of it. We all need to eat day in, day

out. Of course we do. And we should be able to enjoy the foods and drinks that we want to enjoy, but be conscious of it. Speak to your manager at the local supermarket and just ask them what are they doing about zero packaging? What are they doing about tackling waste? Ask the question and if enough store managers get asked. Change will happen. There's some really important things that are happening in big retail, but it has to be led by consumer demand. That is how they operate, of course. And we can also all vote in elections. We can vote for the parliamentarians that we want to represent us. And again, they will only do what we ask of them. And I think we need to know that as citizens, as change makers, as consumers, we've got to be a part of the solution and be active rather than a passive listener and think that things are just happening and everything's wonderful and it's all going to be rainbows in a couple of years because it won't be unless we all are part of the solution.

**Lukxmi Balathasan** [00:42:20] I think that's the inspiring thing from both of you, that you saw the value in this and you've been pushing from bottom up and change has taking place so that has been truly inspiring for me.

**Matt Eastland** [00:42:32] Yeah, for me to guys. So just to say thank you so much for being on the podcast. I bet everyone's learned a lot. I think we certainly have. So you are listening to the Food Fight podcast and looking forward to speaking to you all next time. Rob, thank you very much.

**Rob Wilson (Toast Ale)** [00:42:45] Cheers.

**Matt Eastland** [00:42:46] And Linda, thank you very much.

**Linda Grieder (Rethink Resource)** [00:42:48] Thank you very much as well.