Wageningen UR, Wetenschapswinkel

Wageningen UR (University & Research centre) ondersteunt met de Wetenschapswinkel maatschappelijke organisaties als verenigingen, actiegroepen en belangenorganisaties. Deze kunnen bij ons terecht met onderzoeksvragen die een maatschappelijk doel dienen. Samen met studenten, onderzoekers en maatschappelijke groepen die hiervoor zelf de middelen niet hebben, maken wij inspirerende onderzoeksprojecten mogelijk.

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Smakelijk eten
Aandacht voor eten bij het Leger des Heils

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Summary

The Salvation Army wants to pay more attention to eating and meals. The ambition is to use waste food from the food industry into its warm meals and increase the hospitality at time of eating. The Salvation Army produces about 5,000 meals a day. At this moment the kitchens are not equipped for using huge amounts of leftovers.

The Salvation Army asked Wageningen UR (University & Research centre) Wetenschapswinkel to give advice on the preferred cooking method for the circumstances and ambitions of Salvation Army. Secondly, Salvation Army asked for recommendations to improve the hospitality and atmosphere at the time of eating and to increase the quality of the meals after regeneration.

Together with several MSc students, the Science Shop did research in two phases. First, a business case was performed on several new cooking techniques, which can make the cooking process more flexible. Delivered leftovers often have to be used quickly due to expire dates. So if these foods are processed and vacuumpacked they can be stored much longer.

The second group of students searched for possibilities to improve the way people can experience their meals, for example by atmosphere and by offering meal choice at the time of eating. Data were gathered from literature research and visits to several professional kitchens, including interviews with employees of the Salvation Army.

The most suitable cooking method for Salvation Army in the Netherlands seems to be sous vide. This method can increase storage time and keeps good quality of ingredients. Sous vide offers flexibility at cooking, storing and serving.

Besides that, regeneration of the meals at all locations of the Salvation Army in the Netherlands should also be of good quality. Several new techniques can be found, like microwaves, combi-steamers or wagons for regeneration. Choice of the technique will differ per location and is a matter of custom work. A flexible technique would always be preferred.

A positive ‘meal experience’ is essential for quality. Meals offer the perfect opportunity to bring people together and to socialize. It can potentially even protect people from malnutrition and isolation. The most important recommendation is to delay the moment of choice as much as possible, preferably to the exact moment of eating. If people can choose what they want to eat and how much, they will eat more, they will enjoy more and less food is wasted.
Wageningen UR (University & Research centre) Science Shop supports non-profit organisations by implementing research projects with a potential societal impact in the fields of nutrition and health, sustainable agriculture, water management, environmental quality, and processes of social change.

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