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FOOD LOSS IN SUPERMARKETS: Are there lessons from developing countries?

With the growth of supermarkets in the developing world, how much impact can they have in addressing food loss and waste and are there lessons for or from developing countries for wealthier nations?

This will be the topic explored by Dr Arief Daryanto, Director of the Graduate Program of Management and Business and Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Economics and Management, Bogor Agricultural University, to the Crawford Fund's annual food security conference on 29 and 30 August. Titled 'Waste Not, Want Not: The Circular Economy to Food Security,' the event brings international and Australian specialists together to draw national attention to food loss and waste issues in production, in getting product to market, and in the management and reuse of waste.

"With the significant growth in supermarkets in emerging and developing economies, there is no doubt that there is an important role they can play in reducing food waste," said Dr Daryanto.

"Food loss occurs along the entire food chain, including losses at wholesale and retail markets."

"In developing countries, like Indonesia, food loss at the wholesale and retail level occurs at both traditional and modern markets, and is caused by poor handling, poor transportation systems, and poor analysis in demand and supply."

Dr Daryanto reports that like many developing countries, the number of supermarket outlets in Indonesia is increasing significantly. Modern channels are gradually gaining stores through expansion of outlets and offerings. In the period of 2009-2014, convenience stores enjoyed the value growth at 34% per year, followed by supermarket and hypermarket at 15% and 13%, respectively. The traditional grocery retailers also enjoyed the value growth at 11% per year.

"Although traditional markets remain important, they are gradually being replaced by modern outlets. Hypermarkets, supermarkets and minimarkets continue to develop in Indonesia as increases in purchasing power, changes in consumer preferences, along with improves refrigeration and storage facilities."

"Reducing food loss in supermarkets can increase profits, increase incomes for small farmers supplying to supermarkets, and improve food security in urban areas, as well as avoid environmental problems caused by food waste," he said.

Dr Daryanto will review food loss in supermarkets and use a case study of a leading supermarket in Indonesia to highlight strategies to reduce food loss.

A set of innovative case studies from Australia and around the world will be highlight positive examples of what can be achieved to reduce food loss and waste and reuse wasted food.

Other speakers will include:

- Dr Karen Brooks, Director, CGIAR Research Program on Policies, Institutions and Markets, who will look at the research and policy solutions needed to reduce losses and waste and benefit the environment
- Professor Louise Fresco, President of Wageningen University and Research, addressing 'The Future of Food' and her new book "Hamburgers in Paradise"
- Mr Brian Lipinski, Food Program, World Resources Institute who was involved in the development of the new international Food Loss and Waste Protocol, will highlight how to reduce on-farm losses