OLIO can help you save food waste

Surplus food saviour, OLIO, is helping businesses across the UK share more than 70,000 meals per month, rescuing unsold food that would otherwise have gone to waste.

With the cost of food being wasted through the UK’s hospitality and food service sector alone estimated at £2.9 billion per year, OLIO’s innovative Food Waste Heroes programme has become an invaluable service, not only helping to reduce business food waste but also saving millions of pounds in associated costs.

The simple and speedy OLIO programme puts businesses in touch with some of its 4,500+ trained volunteers to collect and redistribute any unsold food items within the local community, free of charge*.

Founded in 2015, OLIO has quickly grown from a local initiative in North London to a global food-sharing movement, spanning more than 45 countries, thanks in large part to its unique model of over 40,000 brand ambassadors who spread the word about OLIO in their local communities.

* The service is free for small businesses that are happy to deal directly with volunteers once introduced by OLIO. An advanced, full-management and reporting service is also available at a small fee.

SpaceBakery research looks to the future

Will the first people to bake and eat bread on Mars do it thanks to new research started in January? This is the challenge facing the SpaceBakery project, a unique consortium comprising seven Belgian organisations and led by the global bakery, pastry and chocolate expert Puratos.

However, before the consortium uses its research to help feed the first people on the red planet later this century, the project aims to have a clear impact on Earth today. The project will focus on how we can produce food in a more sustainable way and will help provide a nutritional staple food for many regions across the globe.

Using an impressive plant cultivation infrastructure, researchers from the seven members of the consortium will learn how to create the ideal environment for the efficient production of wheat crops, as well as other plants that could be included in bread to increase its nutritional value.

Upstream R&D Director at Puratos, Filip Arnaut explained: “Why focus on bread? Because it is highly nutritional and consumed all over the world, making it an ideal candidate as a staple food for space exploration.

“With this consortium, we are bringing together various knowledge domains and expertise in order to answer a very important question: how can we further improve nutritional value, sustainability and the efficient use of energy to produce food - here bread, one of our main specialties - today, but also tomorrow in more challenging environments.”

In parallel to the research on crops, the consortium will also study many other aspects involved in the entire food production cycle, such as the use and recycling of resources, the monitoring of microbial climate, influence of radiation, and pollination through automated drones.

The Space Bakery project prioritises sustainability, health and the efficient use of resources, providing solutions that will be relevant not only for space technology tomorrow, but also here on Earth today. A total of €6.3 million will be invested by the seven partners to fund the research.