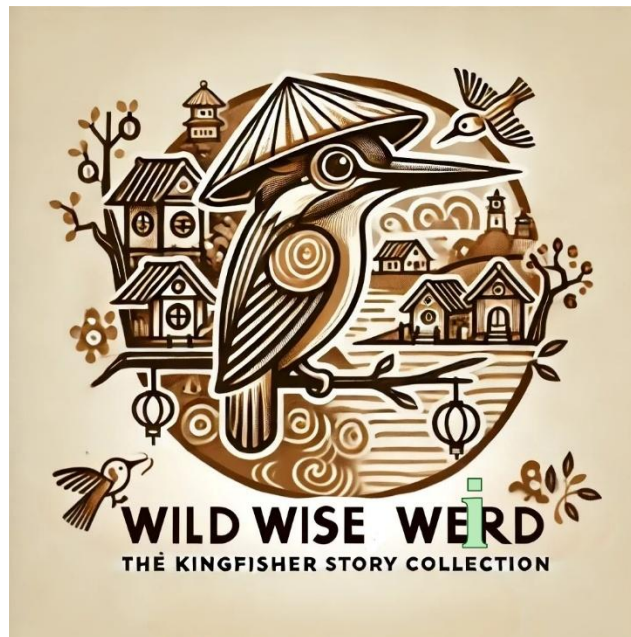


# Digital Food Sharing: How Innovative Platforms are Tackling Food Waste and Hunger

Cú Lừa

29-03-2025



“If you want to find food, you have to go where the food is. Flying far only makes one tired; it doesn’t guarantee anything.”

In “Food”; *Wild Wise Weird* [1]



• • • • •

Food waste and food insecurity represent two of the most enduring and paradoxical challenges facing humanity today. On one hand, nearly 17% of all food produced globally goes to waste each year, resulting not only in substantial economic losses but also in considerable environmental harm due to greenhouse gas emissions from production, transport, and disposal. On the other hand, more than 350 million people worldwide suffer from severe food insecurity, a crisis that has deepened in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Bridging this troubling divide, Food Sharing Platforms (FSPs) have emerged as digital intermediaries that facilitate the redistribution of surplus food from businesses and individuals to those in need [2].

Well-known platforms such as Olio and TooGoodToGo have already demonstrated the potential of such initiatives. However, recent research by Grieco and Morgante [3] reveals that these platforms are doing more than simply redistributing food—they are actively rethinking and reshaping their business models to maximize both impact and sustainability. This process, known as Business Model Innovation (BMI), involves the continuous transformation of how organizations create, deliver, and capture value [4]. In the context of food sharing, BMI has proven vital in addressing the complex operational, social, and environmental challenges that these platforms encounter.

The study examined six food-sharing platforms across Europe and identified three distinct patterns of business model innovation: focusing, moving, and growing. Some platforms, such as Best Before, enhanced operational efficiency by implementing dynamic pricing algorithms and introducing subscription-based models to encourage consistent user engagement. Others, like Babaco Market, broadened their service offerings by providing customizable boxes of surplus fruits and vegetables, including options tailored for workplaces and offices. A particularly notable case is Regusto, which transitioned from a consumer-facing model to a business-to-business (B2B) platform. This shift enabled companies and public institutions to donate surplus food while monitoring their environmental and social impact through blockchain technologies and the use of “impact tokens.”

These examples illustrate that technological tools alone are insufficient. It is the continuous reinvention of business models that enables these platforms to remain adaptive and effective in addressing evolving social and environmental challenges. More fundamentally, the study underscores that food-sharing platforms are not merely about redistributing excess food—they are catalysts for redesigning the broader systems through which society values, shares, and consumes food.

The intersection of digital innovation and social entrepreneurship embodied in food-sharing platforms offers a promising pathway for strengthening the nature-human nexus [5]. By transforming waste into resource, scarcity into opportunity, and consumption into conscious care, these platforms contribute meaningfully to the pursuit of a more sustainable, inclusive, and resilient food system.

## References

- [1] Vuong QH. (2024). *Wild Wise Weird*. <https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0BG2NNHY6/>
- [2] de Almeida OF. (2019). Exploring food waste reducing apps—A business model lens (pp. 367-387). In E Närvänen, N Mesiranta, M Mattila, A Heikkinen (Eds). *Food waste management: Solving the wicked problem*. Springer. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20561-4\\_14](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20561-4_14)
- [3] Grieco C, Morgante A. (2025). New solutions for old problems: Exploring business model innovation in food sharing platforms. *Business Strategy and the Environment*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/bse.4265>
- [4] Clauss T. (2017). Measuring business model innovation: conceptualization, scale development, and proof of performance. *R&D Management*, 47(3), 385-403. <https://doi.org/10.1111/radm.12186>
- [5] Nguyen MH. (2024). How can satirical fables offer us a vision for sustainability? *Visions for Sustainability*. <https://ojs.unito.it/index.php/visions/article/view/11267>