



Foodoo uses machine learning to minimise on-the-go food waste | Photo source Foodoo

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AN AI SOLUTION THAT REDUCES 'GRAB-AND-GO' FOOD WASTE

 FOOD & DRINK

Startup Foodoo uses specialised software and hardware to provide offices with healthy food options with less waste

Spotted: What do you eat when you're at work? While some choose to bring in their own food, many get their lunch on the go. Workplaces and educational campuses often cater for this habit by providing vending machines stocked with pre-packaged food. But much of this food comes in the form of unhealthy treats like crisps, sweets or cookies. Many companies would like to provide fresh, healthy options, but there is a problem: fresh food goes off much more quickly than sugary or salty snacks. The result in an unfortunate trade-off between healthiness and food waste.

Czech startup Foodoo is using AI to tackle this problem. The company partners with commercial kitchens to prepare healthy food options that they then deliver to offices. But what is particularly innovative about Foodoo's approach is how it leverages proprietary software and hardware to minimise waste.

The company tags individually packaged food dishes with information on the dish's name, ingredients, and expiration date. This data is then shared with Foodoo's data centre.

On the hardware side, Foodoo provides offices with a kit that can be installed into any fridge or vending machine. This saves the customer money as they don't have to swap out their existing fridge for a more specialised version. The kit uses scanners to read information about the tagged food items, sending it to Foodoo's cloud-based server where machine learning provides insight into stock levels, food preferences, consumer behaviour, and expiration dates. This data-crunching optimises stock decisions, minimising the amount of food that ends up in the bin.

Food waste is an important issue, and Springwise has spotted several innovations aimed at tackling it. This includes a [digital marketplace](#) for imperfect or surplus produce, and [vapour tech](#) that extends

food shelf life.

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Takeaway:

Many of the food waste **innovations** spotted by Springwise focus on food sold in the supermarket and eaten at home. But the grab-and-go food market is growing rapidly and is therefore an important part of the overall picture. According to one analysis, the food-to-go market in the UK alone is **forecast** to be worth £23.4 billion (€28 billion) by 2024, up from £18.5 billion (€22 billion) in 2019 – an expected increase of 26 per cent. As the food industry is a **major emitter** of greenhouse gases, it is crucial that innovation covers all its sub-sectors.