

Savola and UNEP launch drive to reduce food waste in the Kingdom

By Saleh Fareed
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JEDDAH — About 8 million meals are wasted daily in Saudi Arabia, with its value estimated at SR70 million and that 90% of Saudi Arabia houses are disposing remaining meals in waste, revealed Tarik Ismail, Executive Director of Corporate Affairs and Sustainability and Secretary of the Board of Directors at Savola, during the signing ceremony with the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) to execute "Negaderha" Program aimed at reducing excessive food waste in the Kingdom.

The signing agreement was signed on Tuesday at Savola headquarters here in Jeddah, with the attendance of Abdulaziz Ibrahim Alissa, Board Member and Chairman of the Corporate Social Responsibility Committee in Savola and Fareed Bushehri, UNEP Representative, Rayan Fayez, Savola group CEO, Abdulaziz Alnaghetther, executive manager of Eta'am and Dr. Richard Swannell, Development Director of WRAP.

Commenting on the first of its kind initiat-

ive in the Kingdom, Rayan Fayez, Savola group CEO, said "this is a combination of months and years of hard work and we think this initiative comes at the right time which comes as part of the Kingdom's vision."

During his presentation, Ismail introduced "Negaderha" program — a sustainability program aimed to reduce and manage food waste in KSA, in partnerships with national and international organizations.

He said "the idea of the program is targeting households and families of all parts of the community in addition to business owners from the restaurants, hotels and cafés sector to reduce food waste."

He announced that Savola will provide a million containers to store food leftovers in collaboration with many interested parties, in addition to raising awareness and educating the community to participate in the reduction of food waste and development of the relationship between public and private sectors on one hand and society in the other hand to participate in supporting this cause and mitigating the factors behind excessive food

waste to reach solid and sustainable solutions for this cause.

He also said that partnership between Savola and UNEP aims to reach the maximum effect in KSA where Savola got technical assistance to provide the methodology, ideas and models related to food preservation and food waste management and a manual for business owners to reduce excessive food waste and how to manage it from a legal, social, health and ethical perspective.

Meanwhile, Fareed Bushehri, UNEP Representative, applauded the launch of "Negaderha", saying that the program reflects the keenness of the group to perform its role as a large company in the community to which it belongs.

He also pointed out that UNEP, and in recognition of this step forward by Savola, has signed this partnership agreement, making the first of its kind to be signed with a private company.

Dr. Richard Swannell, Development Director of WRAP (Waste and Resources Action Program) said in his speech that "food waste



Rayan Fayez(far left), Tarik Ismail (far right) and Fareed Bushehri (second right) honor participants

is a global issue and tackling it is a priority. Collaboration has never been more important, which is why I want to thank the Savola group and other organizations that have committed to taking action."

It is hoped to be an encouraging factor for companies everywhere else in the world to follow the same path in order to provide solu-

tions that will improve their societies and help its members to always offer their best.

Reducing consumer food waste could save between \$120 and \$300 billion per year, by 2030, according to a new report by WRAP and the Global Commission on the Economy and Climate. To achieve, this would require a 20-50% reduction in consumer food waste.