

## Exploring Nutritional Equality and Sustainability through Walmart's "Imperfect but Good" Initiative in Chile

On my recent visit to Chile, I delved into a compelling initiative led by Walmart, "Imperfect but Good," which aims to address food waste while making nutritious fruits and vegetables more affordable. The premise of the initiative is simple yet powerful: selling produce that doesn't meet traditional standards of color or shape at a reduced price, thereby encouraging both sustainability and accessibility. My exploration took me into supermarkets across the country, where I observed firsthand how this initiative was being received by the public, particularly in low-income communities, and how it was reshaping the food supply chain.



### Tackling Nutritional Inequality

A key focus of my visit was to understand how "Imperfect but Good" could contribute to solving nutritional inequality in Chile. Like many other countries, Chile faces disparities in access to healthy food, particularly for low-income households. I went to the headquarters of the company to better understand the data structure and met with Walmart's marketing and IT teams to discuss the logistics of the data-sharing agreement. They generously shared valuable insights, which are crucial in assessing how this initiative could influence consumption patterns and address these disparities.

Our initial hypothesis is that fruit and vegetable consumption is lower among lower-income groups due to both price and preference effects. With "Imperfect but Good," the reduced prices of imperfect produce offer a potential solution to the price barrier. Preliminary observations suggest that these lower prices may indeed be helping to bridge the gap, making nutritious food more accessible to all. In the coming months, our analysis will aim to uncover whether preferences also shift in response to this increased accessibility, or if price remains the dominant factor.

### The Impact on Agricultural Suppliers and Waste Reduction

The second facet of this initiative lies in its potential to change the dynamics of food production and waste management among agricultural suppliers. By allowing producers to sell both cosmetically perfect and imperfect fruits and vegetables, Walmart is creating a new market for goods that would have otherwise gone to waste.

Since suppliers are now able to sell a larger proportion of their harvest, they are becoming more efficient and resourceful. The long-term effects of this could contribute to a more sustainable agricultural economy in Chile.

### A Step Towards a More Equitable and Sustainable Future

Walmart's "Imperfect but Good" initiative is still in its early stages in Chile, but the impact it could have on both consumer behavior and the agricultural supply chain is promising. As I wrap up my visit, I am left with the sense that this is not just a project to reduce food waste but also a catalyst for greater social and economic change. With further data analysis, we will be able to quantify the long-term benefits of this initiative, both for consumers and suppliers. For now, it stands as a hopeful example of how innovative market strategies can create a more equitable and sustainable food system.

