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Food Waste at Feasts: An Islamic Perspective on Sustainable Practices for Mitigation

ABSTRACT

Food waste is a significant global issue resulting having economic, social and environmental consequences. Food waste at feasts and communal gatherings are major contributor to global food waste. In Muslim-majority countries, where hospitality and generosity are deeply ingrained cultural values, food waste at weddings is particularly prevalent. Islam not only allows but also encourages festivities and considers feasting an integral part of social and religious life. The Prophet's Sunnah strongly recommends walimah—a celebratory feast, especially for marriages—to the extent that he declared the smoke rising from the fire of a wedding feast as a sign of a valid publicly announced marriage. However, while Islam promotes feasting, it simultaneously calls for moderation, as reflected in both the Prophet's teachings and his own practices. Unfortunately, modern weddings—particularly in terms of their significant food waste—often stand in stark contrast to these teachings. Food waste at feasts stems from multiple behavioral, cultural and social drivers that induce overproduction, excessive portioning and untimeliness of feasts leading to food waste. This article explores the comprehensive multi-faceted Islamic approach to mitigating food waste at feasts, drawing upon Quranic injunctions, Prophetic traditions, and historical practices. It highlights the sacredness of food and the principle of moderation as foundational elements of sustainable food management at feasts. Furthermore, this study examines key strategies rooted in Islamic teachings, including proper planning, timely attendance at feasts, and the shared responsibility of both hosts and guests in minimizing waste. While numerous studies have examined the statistical dimensions of food waste and proposed data-driven solutions, there remains a notable gap in addressing the issue from an Islamic perspective. Islamic teachings offer comprehensive solutions that not only provide practical guidance but also resonate with the religious values of Muslim communities, fostering a deeper commitment to sustainable practices. This study aims to bridge this gap by integrating Islamic principles with contemporary food waste mitigation strategies, offering a framework that align with Islamic values and modern sustainability efforts

Keywords: Food Waste, Feasts, Islam, Sustainability

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Introduction

Eat and drink but waste not by extravagance, certainly He (Allah) likes not Al-Musrifun, those who waste by extravagance" (Al-A'raf - 7:31)

Food waste represents a critical global challenge with profound consequences across environmental, economic, and social dimensions. According to the FAO, approximately one-third of all food produced globally is lost or wasted, amounting to 1.3 billion tons of edible food wasted annually.¹ The economic valuation of this quantity of food loss and waste (FLW) is estimated at approximately USD \$936 billion, excluding the broader social and environmental costs borne by society at large.² This volume of FLW possesses the potential to alleviate undernourishment for one-eighth of the global population³ estimating to nearly 768 million people as of 2020 (FAO, IFAD, WHO, WFP, and UNICEF, 2021).⁴ It can also significantly contribute to addressing the escalating food demand, which is projected to increase to approximately 150–170% of the current levels by 2050.⁵ Food waste contributes significantly to greenhouse gas emissions, accounting for 8-10% of global annual emissions⁶ which amounts to about 2.7 Gt CO₂e⁷ of emissions.⁸ Emissions. Uneaten food also accounts for a quarter of freshwater consumption in agriculture⁹ and occupies 1.4 billion hectares of land, almost 30 percent of world's agricultural land area.¹⁰ Thus food waste places immense pressure on arable land and biodiversity. Within the framework of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 12, which emphasizes responsible production and consumption, Target 12.3 seeks to achieve a dual objective: to halve per capita global food waste.¹¹

1 Christel Cederberg and Ulf Sonesson, *Global Food Losses and Food Waste: Extent, Causes and Prevention; Study Conducted for the International Congress Save Food! At Interpack 2011, [16 - 17 May], Düsseldorf, Germany, ed. Jenny Gustavsson (International Congress Save Food!, Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2011).*

2 Food Wastage Footprint (Project), *Food Wastage Footprint Full-Cost Accounting (Food & Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), 2014).*

3 Cederberg and Sonesson, *Global Food Losses and Food Waste.*

4 Shelley McGuire, 'FAO, IFAD, and WFP. *The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2015: Meeting the 2015 International Hunger Targets: Taking Stock of Uneven Progress.* Rome: FAO, 2015', *Advances in Nutrition* 6, no. 5 (September 2015): 623–24, <https://doi.org/10.3945/an.115.009936>.

5 Julian Parfitt, Mark Barthel, and Sarah Macnaughton, 'Food Waste within Food Supply Chains: Quantification and Potential for Change to 2050', *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences* 365, no. 1554 (27 September 2010): 3065–81, <https://doi.org/10.1098/rstb.2010.0126>.

6 'Food Loss and Waste Account for 8-10% of Annual Global Greenhouse Gas Emissions; Cost USD 1 Trillion Annually | UNFCCC', accessed 23 December 2024, <https://unfccc.int/news/food-loss-and-waste-account-for-8-10-of-annual-global-greenhouse-gas-emissions-cost-usd-1-trillion>.

7 **CO₂e (Carbon Dioxide Equivalent)**: This is a standardized unit used to measure the impact of different greenhouse gases on global warming, expressed in terms of the equivalent amount of carbon dioxide (CO₂). For example, methane has a much higher global warming potential than CO₂, so its emissions are converted into CO₂e for comparison.

8 Food Wastage Footprint (Project), *Food Wastage Footprint Full-Cost Accounting*, 34.

9 M. Kumm et al., 'Lost Food, Wasted Resources: Global Food Supply Chain Losses and Their Impacts on Freshwater, Cropland, and Fertiliser Use', *Science of The Total Environment* 438 (November 2012): 477–89, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2012.08.092>.

10 Food Wastage Footprint: *Impacts on Natural Resources: Summary Report (Rome: FAO, 2013)*, 6.

11 Hugo Muñoz Urena, 'Legislating to Prevent and Reduce Food Loss and Waste', *Legal brief for parliamentarians in Latin America and the Caribbean No. 10 (FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, 2023)*, 3, <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/374b4482-0e1f-442a-abcd-1dec4f883b02/content#:~:text=Moreover%2C%20FLW%20has%20ethical%20and,the%20production%20and%20supply%20chains>.

Food Waste at Feasts: An Islamic Perspective on Sustainable Practices for Mitigation

From an Islamic perspective, food is regarded as a divine blessing and an essential resource for the sustenance of life, thereby elevating food security to the status of a fundamental human right. The Quran repeatedly underscores the significance of food as a vital provision and a manifestation of Allah's benevolence which necessitates its mindful use and gratitude. One such verse reads:

يا أيها الذين آمنوا كلوا من طيبات ما رزقناكم واشكروا لله إن كنتم إياه تعبدون ﴿١٧٢﴾

“O you who have believed, eat from the good things which we have provided for you and be grateful to Allah if it is [indeed] Him that you worship”. (Quran, 2:172)

Similarly, the Quran explicitly admonishes those who squander food, both directly and indirectly. For example, in one of its parables, the Quran recounts a tribe's squander of food and the consequences they had to face for it:

وضرب الله مثلا قرية كانت آمنة مطمئنة يأتيها رزقها رغدا من كل مكان فكفرت بأنعم الله فأذاقها الله لباس الجوع والخوف بما كانوا يصنعون ﴿١١٢﴾

“And Allah presents an example: a city which was safe and secure, its provision coming to it in abundance from every location, but it denied the favors of Allah. So Allah made it taste the envelopment of hunger and fear for what they had been doing”. (Quran 16:112)

In the explanation of this verse, it is narrated that the people of this city were granted ample sustenance by Allah. They found it hard to clean themselves with stones after relieving themselves so they began to use bread shaped like pestle for the same purpose. Subsequently, they faced Allah's wrath who sent upon them insects smaller than locusts that destroyed all the crops. Their hardship reached the point where they returned to using the bread they used for purification as food.”¹² This anecdote in Quran identifies abundance of food as one of the significant drivers to its waste.

Allowance and Encouragement for Feasts and Celebrations in Islam

Islamic teachings strongly encourage the act of feeding others, whether they are rich or poor, and regard it as a meritorious deed that leads to Paradise. On one occasion, a Bedouin approached the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and asked him to teach him a single act that would guarantee his entry into Jannah. Among the deeds the Prophet (PBUH) advised him was feeding others.¹³

Similarly, Islam not only permits but also encourages celebrations, with feasting being an integral part of such occasions. In the context of marriage, public celebration is particularly emphasized. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) stated that a marriage is not truly established until it is publicly announced, symbolized by either the smoke from the food preparation or the beating of drums:

¹² Syed al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān b. Muḥammad, *Da'ā'im al-Islām*, vol. 2, 2 vols, *Zikr Ṣunūf al-At'imah wa 'Ilājūhā wa al-Hājah ilayhā* (Mention of the Types of Foods, Their Treatment, and the Need for Them), (Mumbai: Daerat al Tabe' wa Nashr, Aljamea-tus-Saifiyah, 1436H).

¹³ Syed al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān b. Muḥammad, *Da'ā'im al-Islām*, vol. 2, 2 vols, *Zikr It'ām al-Ṭa'ām* (Chapter of the Virtue of Feeding Others) (Mumbai: Daerat al Tabe' Wa Nashr, Aljamea-tus-Saifiyah, 1436H).

ولا يكون نكاح في السر حتى يرى دخان أو يسمع حس دف.¹⁴

"Marriage should not be done in secret until smoke (of the food being prepared) is seen or the sound of a drum is heard."

This serves the purpose of publicizing the marriage, ensuring that the couple's union is recognized and acknowledged by society.

The food and festivity are so closely related that the divine bestowment of Mā'idah on Bani Israel was considered a festivity in its own right by the Prophet Essa; as stated in Quran:

قال عيسى ابن مريم اللهم ربنا أنزل علينا مائدة من السماء تكون لنا عيداً لأولنا وآخرنا وآية منك

" 'Īsā ibn Maryam said: O Allah, our Lord, send down to us a Mā'idah from heaven that will be a festival for us—for the first and the last of us—and a sign from You." (Surah Al-Ma'idah, 5:114)

In Islamic tradition, the Sunnah also recommends walimah, especially on four occasions: Urs (marriage), Khurs (Aqiqah), 'I'zar (circumcision), and Wakīrah (returning from travel).¹⁵ This allowance for celebration aligns with the broader Islamic principle that one should visibly express the bestowment of Allah's blessings upon his own self.

The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said:

إذا آتاك الله مالا فليز أثره عليك¹⁶

"When Allah taala has favoured you with his blessings you should make them visible on his own self"

However, while Islam encourages celebrations, it also cautions against extravagance and emphasizes moderation, rooted in mindfulness and gratitude for Allah's provisions. For instance, regarding wedding feasts (walimah), the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) limited the duration to two days, warning against excessiveness and ostentation:

الوليمة أول يوم حق، والثاني معروف، وما كان بعد ذلك فهو رياء وسمعة.

"A wedding feast on the first day is a right, on the second day it is an act of kindness, and anything beyond that is mere showmanship and vanity."

Moreover, marriage itself is regarded as a deeply spiritual and sacred bond in Islam, with profound religious significance. It is narrated that whenever the Prophet (PBUH) learned of a companion's marriage, he would declare that his faith has been completed (كمل دينه).¹⁷ This highlights marriage as a spiritual experience, while its celebrations and feasts serve as a means of acknowledging and expressing gratitude for Allah's blessings.

14 Syed al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān b. Muḥammad, *Da'āim al-Islām*, vol. 2, 2 vols, *Zikr al-Dukhūl bil-Nisā' wa Mu'āsharatihinna* (Chapter on Marital Relations and Conduct with Women) . (Mumbai: Daerat al Tabe' Wa Nashr, Aljamea-tus-Saifiyah, 1436H).

15 Al-Dhahabi, *Mizan al-I'tidal*, 2:179; Syed al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān b. Muḥammad, *Da'āim al-Islām*, vol. 2, 2 vols, *Zikr al-Dukhūl bil-Nisā' wa Mu'āsharatihinna* (Chapter on Marital Relations and Conduct with Women) . (Mumbai: Daerat al Tabe' Wa Nashr, Aljamea-tus-Saifiyah, 1436H).

16 Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani. *Lisan al-Mizan*. Vol. 8, (419); *Al-Nasa'i* (5223); *Al-Sunan al-Kubra* (9557); Syed Mohammad Burhanuddin, *Roḍat Hudāyāt*, vol. 2, ḥadīth no. 45 (1433 H).

A Hadith with similar wordings is found in this regard: من اعطاه الله خيراً فليز عليه اثره.

17 Syed al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān b. Muḥammad, *Da'āim al-Islām*, vol. 2, 2 vols, *Zikr al-Raghā' IB fi al-Nikāḥ* (Mumbai: Daerat al Tabe' Wa Nashr, Aljamea-tus-Saifiyah, 1436H).

Unfortunately, modern Muslim weddings often deviate from these principles, with celebrations becoming increasingly extravagant and marked by significant food waste. This contrasts sharply with Islamic teachings, which emphasize moderation and responsible consumption.

The following chapter will examine the issue of food waste at feasts, identifying its underlying causes and exploring Islamic strategies for its mitigation.

Food waste at Feasts and its Solutions in Islamic Teachings

Feasts and festivals are major contributors to global food waste. A study indicated that food discarded at single Saudi wedding was sufficient to feed 250 hungry people.¹⁸ Similarly, a study on food waste in Karachi wedding halls found that, on average, each guest wastes nearly half a kilogram of food, contributing to an annual total of approximately 307,800 tons of food waste from weddings in Karachi alone.¹⁹ Likewise, research conducted on weddings in Peshawar revealed that more than a quarter of the food prepared remained unconsumed, making it highly susceptible to waste.²⁰

Several factors contribute to food waste at feasts, with inaccurate forecasting of food needs being a primary driver.²¹ The planning fallacy—a cognitive bias where people overestimate their expectations—plays a significant role in food waste, particularly during large gatherings. Hosts often anticipate full attendance at weddings and similar events, leading to excess food when actual attendance falls short. Additionally, cultural expectations of generous hospitality further exacerbate overcooking, as hosts seek to demonstrate abundance. While this practice is intended to uphold hospitality norms, it frequently results in substantial food waste. Planning fallacy is particularly observed at iftar meals during the month of Ramadan. Fasting for a full day leads to a strong urge for food²² resulting in over preparation by the host. While in contrast, fasting reduces the stomach's capacity. This contrast in the perception and reality of food consumption results in substantial amounts of uneaten food.

An illustrative example from the Quran highlights that food presented at a feast may sometimes remain uneaten due to various reasons. In the case of Prophet Ibrahim, when divine messengers visited him, he served them a roasted calf, which they did not consume. The Quran narrates:

لقد جاءت رسلنا إبراهيم بالبشرى قالوا سلاما قال سلام فما لبث أن جاء بعجل حنيذ ﴿٦٩﴾ فلما رأى أيديهم لا تصل إليه نكرهم وأوجس منهم خيفة

"When our messengers came to Ibrahim with good news, they greeted him with 'Peace.' He replied, 'Peace,' and soon brought them a roasted calf. But when he saw their hands did not reach for it, he felt uneasy with them and became fearful." (Quran, 11:69).

18 Jeawon Kim et al., 'Consumer Perspectives on Household Food Waste Reduction Campaigns', and *Journal of Cleaner Production* 243 (January 2020): 118608, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2019.118608>.

19 Abdulrauf Farooqi, Akhlaq Ahmed, and Muhammad Faisal Yaseen, 'WORLDWIDE FOOD WASTE IN MUSLIM MARRIAGE CEREMONIES: A CASE STUDY CONDUCTED IN KARACHI, A MEGA CITY OF 23.5 MILLION, AND CITY OF DIVERSE MUSLIM COMMUNITIES' 10, no. 5 (2016): 69.

20 Irfan Ullah, 'Food Waste and Its Management in Wedding Halls: A Case Study on Peshawar', 2021, <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.32347.08487>.

21 Carlos Mena, B. Adenso-Diaz, and Ozgur Yurt, 'The Causes of Food Waste in the Supplier-Retailer Interface: Evidences from the UK and Spain', *Resources, Conservation and Recycling* 55, no. 6 (April 2011): 648–58, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resconrec.2010.09.006>.

22 Jônatas De Oliveira et al., 'Try Not to Think about Food: An Association between Fasting, Binge Eating and Food Cravings', *Journal of the National Medical Association* 116, no. 5 (October 2024): 588–99, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jnma.2024.09.005>.

The Prophet Ibrahim mistook the angels for ordinary human guests and, as a result, served them food which they did not consume. This example illustrates that, despite the best efforts in food preparation, unforeseen circumstances may lead to food remaining uneaten, thereby contributing to food waste.

Proper management of food at feasts, particularly large ones are crucial for reduction of food waste. This is exemplified in the grand feasts of Prophet Sulayman (peace be upon him) to which Quran refers in the following verse:

يعملون له ما يشاء من محاريب وتمائيل وجفان كالجواب وقدور راسيات ۖ اعملوا آل داوود شكراً ۖ وقليل من عبادي الشكور ﴿١٣﴾

"They (Jinn) made for him whatever he wished—sanctuaries, statues, large platters like reservoirs, and firmly set cauldrons. Work, O family of Dawud, in gratitude. But few of my servants are truly grateful." (Quran, 34:13)

The inclusion of such detailed descriptions of food vessels in the Quran highlights the fundamental role of food in a well-ordered society—so much so that its preparation is mentioned alongside structures dedicated to worship, i.e., maḥārib and tamāthīl.

The vessels discussed included large bowls like reservoirs (Jifān ka-al-jawābi) to serve the food, which were large enough to accommodate up to 1,000 persons. It also included "firmly set cauldrons" (quḍūrīn rāsiyāt) used to cook food, which were so large that they could not be moved and required a staircase to access them.²³ Sa'id ibn Jubayr explained that these were enormous copper pots, while al-Dahhak stated that they were carved directly from mountains. Ibn al-'Arabi likened them to the legendary cauldrons of 'Abdullah ibn Jud'an in pre-Islamic Arabia, which required ladders to access. Similarly, Sufi lodges maintained large communal cooking vessels in later centuries.²⁴ The immensity of the cauldrons alludes to collective food preparation, while the large bowls are indicative of communal eating. As discussed above, both methods align with reducing food waste.

It is further narrated that despite the vast quantities of food prepared, Prophet Sulayman (peace be upon him) himself ate only simple food, feeding his household with coarse flour while reserving fine wheat flour for the poor. He is also reported to have said that he never ate to satiety. When asked for the reason, he replied:

اخاف ان شبعت ان انسى الجياع²⁵

"I fear that if I am full, I will forget those who are hungry."

This serves as evidence that, despite the abundance of food at his feasts, everything was efficiently distributed among those in need, while Prophet Sulayman himself maintained the simplicity of his own diet. This statement also demonstrates that these feasts were not excessive indulgences but rather an organized system of feeding people.

23 Jalal al-Din Abd al-Rahman Al-Suyuti and Jalal al-Din Abd al-Rahman, *Tafsir Al-Jalalayn*, 1st ed. (Cairo: Dar al-Hadith, n.d.), 564.

24 Ibn al-'Arabi, Muhammad ibn 'Abd Allah. *Ahkam al-Qur'an*. Vol. 4. Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 2003, p. 12.

25 [Al-Tha'alibi, Abd al-Rahman](https://ketabonline.com/ar/books/10767/read?part=3&page=1215&index=4303948/4303952). *Tafsir al-Tha'alibi*. Vol. 3. Beirut: Mu'assasat al-A'lamī, n.d., p. 242. Jami'al-Kutub al-Islamiyyah. Accessed February 7, 2025. <https://ketabonline.com/ar/books/10767/read?part=3&page=1215&index=4303948/4303952>.

The example of Prophet Sulayman's feasts illustrates that adequate food production at feasts, when managed with wisdom, need not result in waste. Instead, they can serve as models of strategic food management. This story also indicates towards collective preparation of meal in communal kitchens which has been identified to eliminate urban hunger, introducing variety to meals along with reducing food waste.²⁷ Preparing meals in this manner also increases access to healthy, homemade meals on a daily basis.

An exemplary model of this concept is found within the Dawoodi Bohra Muslim Community, which has established a community kitchen known as Faizul Mawaid al Burhaniyah (FMB).²⁸ This initiative provides a nutritious meal every day to each community household worldwide, with a dual focus on ensuring food security and minimizing food waste. Integral to the operation of FMB is the Dana committee²⁹, which is specifically tasked with managing the disposition of leftovers in these kitchens, households and feasts.

Moderation of Menus and Servings

Large menus at feasts and restaurants have been found to significantly increase waste while substantial food waste reduction has been observed under the narrow menu.³⁰ Similarly, regulating portion size has also been found to reduce food waste.³¹ Oversized portions driven by the use of large plates often result in unfinished plates significantly contribute to food waste. Reduced plate and portion sizes reduce the leftovers in them (Freedman and Brochado, 2010; Rolls et al, 2002).³² A study on the effect of size on food waste among hotel guests in Norway found that when the plate diameter was reduced from 24 to 21 cm, the food waste was reduced by almost 20% (Kallbekken and Saelen, 2012).³³

The Prophet's own practice exemplified moderation in hosting feasts. For instance, during his marriage to Maymuna bint Harith, a simple dish called Hais, consisting of dates mixed with clarified butter and cheese, was served.³⁴ The Prophet invited believers to the feast in groups of ten.³⁵ Besides the simplicity of menu, the instance also signifies the importance of collective

26 'Community Kitchen Cooperative', Stop Food Waste (blog), 22 September 2021, <https://stopfoodwaste.org/tips/blog/community-kitchen-cooperative>.

27 WPAB, "'Creating Community Kitchens to Combat Urban Hunger'", 7 January 2025, <https://www.fundsforngos.org/all-proposals/a-sample-proposal-on-creating-community-kitchens-to-combat-urban-hunger/>.

28 'Faiz Al-Mawaid al-Burhaniyah', The Dawoodi Bohras, accessed 2 March 2025, <https://www.thedawoodibohras.com/faiz-al-mawaid-al-burhaniyah/>.

29 'Dana Committee', accessed 2 March 2025, <https://danacommittee.com/#/>.

30 Hongxing Liu, Joaquín Gómez-Miñambres, and Danyi Qi, 'Menu-Dependent Food Choices and Food Waste', Resources, Conservation and Recycling 176 (January 2022): 105919, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resconrec.2021.105919>.

31 Rachel Richardson, Melissa Pflugh Prescott, and Brenna Ellison, 'Impact of Plate Shape and Size on Individual Food Waste in a University Dining Hall', Resources, Conservation and Recycling 168 (May 2021): 105293, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resconrec.2020.105293>.

32 Marjorie R. Freedman and Carolina Brochado, 'Reducing Portion Size Reduces Food Intake and Plate Waste', Obesity 18, no. 9 (September 2010): 1864–66, <https://doi.org/10.1038/oby.2009.480>; Barbara J Rolls, Erin L Morris, and Liane S Roe, 'Portion Size of Food Affects Energy Intake in Normal-Weight and Overweight Men and Women', The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition 76, no. 6 (December 2002): 1207–13, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ajcn/76.6.1207>.

33 Steffen Kallbekken and Håkon Sælen, "'Nudging' Hotel Guests to Reduce Food Waste as a Win-Win Environmental Measure", Economics Letters 119, no. 3 (June 2013): 325–27, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.econlet.2013.03.019>.

34 Muḥammad Bāqir al-Majlisī, Biḥār al-Anwār, vol. 100 (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī), 277.

35 Syed al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān bin Muḥammed, Sharḥ Al-Akhbār Fī Faḍā'il al-A'imma al-Aṭḥār (Mumbai: Aljameatus-Saifiyah Press, 1427), vol. 2.

serving of the food to the guests. Collective eating not only reduces the amount of food needed but also increases appetite and collaboration in finishing the food. There is an Arab saying which says:

العاشية تهيج الآلية³⁶

"The one with appetite provokes the unwilling."

They mean that a person who does not feel like eating may develop an appetite upon seeing someone else eating. Many of the Prophet's Hadith promote the practice of communal eating. One such Hadith elaborates the value of collective dining in a vivid manner:

أَحَبُّ الطَّعَامِ إِلَى اللَّهِ مَا كَثُرَتْ عَلَيْهِ الْأَيْدِي³⁷

"The food most beloved to Allah is that upon which many hands partake."

This Hadith underscores that communal eating not only enhances the food's spiritual significance but also aligns it with Allah's preferences.

Another Prophetic tradition emphasizes simplicity in meals, indicating particularly to limit the combination of sweet, savory, and curry to a single dish. It is narrated that the Prophet (peace be upon him) once visited Quba on a Thursday while fasting. As evening approached, he requested something to break his fast. A man from the Ansar stood up and presented him with a cup of milk mixed with honey. Upon drinking it and realizing the combination, the Prophet (peace be upon him) removed it from his mouth and said:

ادامان يجتزأ باحدهما دون الآخر ، لا اشربه ولا احرمه ، ولكني اتواضع لربي ، فانه من تواضع لله رفعه الله ، ومن تكبر على الله خفضه الله ، ومن اقتصد في معيشته رزقه الله ، ومن بذر حرمه الله³⁸

"It is a {mixture of} two idam (any food that is eaten with bread; curry) where one of them would suffice from the other. I would neither drink it nor forbid it, but I humble myself before my Lord. Verily, whoever humbles himself for Allah, Allah will elevate him. And whoever exalts himself above Allah, Allah will lower him. And whoever is moderate in his livelihood, Allah will provide for him. And whoever wastes, Allah will deprive him. "

This narration underscores the Prophet's (peace be upon him) preference for modesty in menus, as he regarded the combination of honey and milk as an instance of excess and self-indulgence. His personal restraint in this matter serves as an implicit guideline for maintaining simplicity in meals, suggesting that a single dish per course is sufficient. Another instance from the Prophet's Seerah hint towards sequential serving of dishes in a feast while also emphasizing on moderation in menu and servings. When Allah revealed the command to warn his nearest kin in the verse (وانذر عشيرتك الاقربين) (Quran 26:214), the Prophet ﷺ instructed

36 Ibn Qutaybah, 'Uyūn al-Akhbār, vol. 3 (<https://shamela.ws/book/23790/1110#p1>), 248.

37 Al-Ṭabarānī, Al-Mu'jam al-Awsat, 7:217; al-Bayhaqī, Shu'ab al-Īmān, 7:3154; Ibn al-Qaysarānī, Dhakhīrat al-Huffāz, 1:238; al-Dhahabī, Mīzān al-ʿIṭidāl, 2:650; al-Suyūfī, Al-Jāmi' al-Ṣaghīr, 212; Muḥammad Jār Allāh al-Ṣa'dī, Al-Nawāfiḥ al-'Aṭīrah, 20; al-Albānī, Al-Silsilah al-Ṣaḥīḥah, 895; Shu'ayb al-Arna'ūt, Takhrīj Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā', 15:9.

38 Syed al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān b. Muḥammad, Da'āim al-Islām, vol. 2, 2 vols, Zikr Sunuf al-At'ima wa 'Ilajaha wa al-Haja ilayha (The Mention of Types of Foods, Their Treatment, and the Need for Them) (Mumbai: Daerat al Tab' Wa Nashr, Aljamea-tus-Saifiyah, 1436H).

A similar Hadith is also found in [Al-Haythami](#), Majma' al-Zawā'id (5/37); [Al-Shawkani](#), Al-Fawā'id al-Majmū'ah (p. 177); [Al-Tabarani](#), Al-Mu'jam al-Awsat (4894); [Ibn 'Asakir](#), Madh al-Tawāḍu' (15); [Al-Asbahani](#), Al-Tarhib wa al-Tarhib (637); [Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani](#), Fath al-Bārī (9/485).

Food Waste at Feasts: An Islamic Perspective on Sustainable Practices for Mitigation

Hazrat Ali (peace be upon him) to invite the sons of Abdul Muttalib. There were forty of them, one of whom alone could have eaten that entire meal. The Prophet provided them with a modest meal of one sheep leg, a measure of barley, and a large vessel of milk. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) blessed the food by placing his hand on it. They ate until they were full. Then he said to Ali (peace be upon him), "Give them something to drink." He brought them a vessel of milk, and they all drank from it until they were satisfied.^{39/40}

It can be noted here that the Prophet served them the dish prepared from barley and sheep leg first, and ordered to serve the milk only after they had finished the initial dish. This sequential serving method contrasts sharply with the modern buffet style at feasts, where guests often take large portions of all dishes simultaneously driven by an optimism bias, wrongfully thinking they have the appetite to finish those portions. This leads to inevitable food waste when they cannot finish what they have taken. The Prophet's approach of serving dishes one at a time and in a limited quantity prevents waste and is honoring to the guests getting served. It also allows them to enjoy each course fully and assess their appetite before moving on to the next. Moreover, serving of one course after another tends to increase the appetite. It has been wisely said,

ان الطعام اذا جاء لونا بعد لون كان اشهى⁴¹

"When a variety of courses are prepared and then served one after the other a meal is more appetising"

In the case of buffets, the guests could also practice the sequential method while serving themselves. The personal responsibility in this regard is highlighted by another Hadith where the Prophet has counseled that if one is presented with bread and meat, he should start with the bread to satisfy his hunger and then eat the meat. The hadith is as follows:

اذا اتيتم بالخبز واللحم، فابدءوا بالخبز، فسدوا به الجوع، ثم كلوا اللحم⁴²

'When you are presented with bread and meat, start with the bread to satisfy your hunger, then eat the meat.'

Drawing from personal experience, the principle of collective servings at feasts as found in the Prophetic traditions is practiced in Dawoodi Bohra Community to a great effect on mitigating food waste. The food is served on a large, stainless-steel tray called Thaal, which is about three feet in diameter, placed on a stand (kundli) atop a ground sheet (safra). Eight individuals sit around the Thaal, sharing food directly from common dishes.

39 Al-Ṭabarī, Jāmi' al-Bayān, Quran 26:214; accessed January 31, 2025, <https://quran.ksu.edu.sa/tafseer/tabary/sura26-aya214.html>;

40 Syed al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān bin Muhammed, Sharḥ Al-Akhbār Fī Faḍā'il al-A'imma al-Aṭhār, vol. 1.

41 Syed al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān bin Muhammed, vol. 1.

42 Shaykh al-Kulaynī, Al-Kāfi, ed. 'Alī Akbar al-Ghafārī, 3rd ed., vol. 6, 1367H, Hadith 403.; Syed al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān b. Muḥammad, Da'āim al-Islām, vol. 2, 2 vols, Zikr Ādāb al-Akl (Mumbai: Daerat al Tabe' Wa Nashr, Aljamea-tus-Saifiyah, 1436H).



This arrangement minimizes the uneven distribution seen in individual plating, ensuring equal access. Furthermore, courses are served sequentially, echoing the Prophet's practice of serving dishes one at a time to encourage savoring each course.

The examples discussed above underscore the Prophet's preference for simplicity in menu choices, limited variety of dishes, appropriate portion sizes along with the guidance for the way of serving food to guests. They serve as a guiding principle for Muslims to follow moderation and avoid unnecessary waste at feasts while fulfilling the Sunnah's call to hospitality.

Addressing the Tendency for Excessive Cooking

As discussed earlier, the tendency to overcook or prepare excess food at feasts and households, driven by a desire to provide abundantly, often leads to food waste. To counter this tendency, it is helpful to consider the following principle mentioned in a hadith: The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) states:

طعام الواحد يكفي الاثنين ، وطعام الاثنين يكفي الأربعة⁴³

"Food for one person is sufficient for two, and food for two is sufficient for four".

This guidance underscores the concept of moderation, encouraging individuals to prepare meals with a focus on sufficiency rather than excess. An example of this principle is illustrated in the narrative of the People of the Cave as recounted in the Quran:

فابعثوا أحداكم بورقكم هذه إلى المدينة فلينظر أيها أزكى طعاما فليأتكم برزق منه وليتلطف ولا يشعرن بكم أحدا

So send one of you with this silver coin of yours to the city and let him look to which is the best and most sufficient of food, and bring you provision from it and let him be cautious. And let no one be aware of you. (Quran, 18:19)

Al-Qurtubi interprets the term "أزكى" (azkā) in this verse as signifying food that could suffice for more individuals than initially intended. The People of the Cave were cautious about being discovered and therefore sought food in modest quantities to avoid raising suspicion. This prudence ensured that the provision appeared to serve only a small group, thus reducing the likelihood of their location being revealed. The chosen food—believed by some scholars to be rice—demonstrated its sufficiency by meeting the needs of more people than anticipated.⁴⁴

⁴³ Al-Bukhari (5392); Muslim (2058); Al-Tirmidhi (1820); Al-Nasa'i in Al-Sunan al-Kubra (6773) ; Ahmad (9277); Ibn Hibban, Sahih Ibn Hibban (5237); Al-Haythami, Majma' al-Zawa'id (5/24).

⁴⁴ al-Qurtubi, Al-Jami' Li Ahkam al-Qur'an, ed. Ahmad al-Barduni and Ibrahim Atfish, 2nd Edition, vol. 10 (Cairo: Dar al-Kutub al-Misriyya, 1964), 375.

Keeping the factor discussed above in mind can help alleviate concerns about cooking insufficient quantities. Another hadith specifically addresses the sufficiency of smaller portions for Muslims, stating,

ان الكافر يأكل في سبعة امعاء، وان المؤمن يأكل في معا واحد⁴⁵

The unbeliever eats with seven intestines, whereas the believer eats with one intestine. This teaching is particularly relevant when preparing iftar meals during Ramadan, as it emphasizes that a modest amount of food should be sufficient, thereby preventing the preparation of excessive quantities that are unlikely to be consumed. The essence of this Hadith can also be applied to reduced plate size and portion size at feasts.

Timeliness at Feasts:

The Quran counsels the guest to attend the feasts in timely manner and leave promptly after eating. During Prophet's marriage to Zainab binte Jahash, Quran counselled the guests not to arrive so early that they would have to wait for the food to be cooked causing inconvenience for the host. This guidance is expressed in the following words by Quran:

يا أيها الذين آمنوا لا تدخلوا بيوت النبي إلا أن يؤذن لكم إلى طعام غير ناظرين إناه ولكن إذا دعيتم فادخلوا فإذا طعمتم فانتشروا ولا مستأنسين لحديث

O you who believe, do not enter the houses of the Prophet unless permission is given to you for a meal, without waiting for its preparation. However, when you are invited, then enter, and once you have eaten, disperse without lingering for casual conversation. (Quran 33:52)

In the context of food waste, early arrival of guests may result in serving undercooked meals which might remain uneaten and wasted. This phenomenon is often encountered at BBQ's where meat remains undercooked due to hasty grilling hence cannot be eaten and goes to waste. At peak hours, restaurants also tend to serve undercooked meals which are then discarded. Likewise, the early arrival of guests at an event may pressure the caterer to serve undercooked food to avoid being reprimanded by the host.

In contrast, Imam Husain bin Ali's counsel advocates for prompt and timely attendance to the feasts. He once encountered a man declining a meal invitation, to which he responded:

قم فليس في الدعوة عفو، وان كنت مفطرا فكل، وان كنت صائما فبارك⁴⁶

45 Syed Idris Imaduddin, *Uyun Al-Akhbar Wa-Funun al-Athar Fi Faḍail al-Aimma al-Aṭhar, Silsilat Al-Turāth al-Fātimī* (Dar al-Andalus, 1970), <https://books.google.com.pk/books?id=euafSwAACAAJ>.

There is an interesting background for this Hadith narrated in history.

A group of horsemen of the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) went out before the conquest [of Mecca] and captured a man from the tribe of Banu Hanifa without knowing who he was. They brought him to the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him), who said, "Do you know whom you have captured? This is Thumama ibn Uthal al-Hanafi. Release him." The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) returned to his family and said, "Gather whatever food you have and send it to him." He also ordered that his camel be brought to him in the morning and in the evening for him to drink its milk. However, nothing he ate seemed to benefit him until he embraced Islam. After converting, he consumed very little, which astonished the Muslims. The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) said, "Why are you astonished? He ate in the morning as a disbeliever and ate in the evening as a believer. Indeed, a disbeliever eats in seven intestines, whereas a believer eats in one intestine."

46 Syed al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān b. Muḥammad, *Da'aim al-Islām*, vol. 2, 2 vols, *Zikr It'ām al-Ṭa'ām* (Chapter of the Virtue of Feeding Others) (Mumbai: Daerat al Tabe' Wa Nashr, Aljamea-tus-Saifiyah, 1436H).

"Stand up and go, for there is no valid excuse for declining a meal invitation. If you are not fasting, then partake in the meal; if you are, then seek blessings for your host."

He counselled the man to promptly attend the feast without delay (قم فليس في الدعوة عفو). The above incidences indicate that the feasts should be attended on time; not too early nor too late. Furthermore, the Quran also instructs guests to avoid prolonging their stay and to leave immediately after the meal. The Quran says:

وإذا طعمتم فانتشروا غير مستأنسين لحديث

"And when you have eaten, disperse without seeking to remain for conversation".

In the context of food waste, this practice leaves the host with sufficient time and energy to assess leftovers, pack them, and distribute them to those in need, thereby ensuring that excess food is managed responsibly.

Leftover Management:

In the event of food leftovers at feasts, the primary responsibility rests with the hosts to manage the excess in a manner consistent with Islamic values. The most suitable and ethical approach is to donate the leftover food to those in need before it spoils. Although this task may be challenging amid the activity and busyness of an event, Islamic teachings emphasize the importance of distributing surplus food promptly to benefit others.

A relevant anecdote narrated by Abu Ja'far Muhammad bin Ali (peace be upon him) illustrates the profound impact of charity of leftover food. He narrated that a man from the Bani Israel had one beloved son. Before the son's wedding, the father received a dream warning him that his son would die on the night of his marriage. Deeply concerned, the father delayed the wedding, but eventually allowed it to proceed, praying throughout the night for his son's safety. The next morning, the son was found in good health. That night, the father received another dream, informing him that Allah extended his son's life due to an act of charity. Upon inquiry, the son explained that on his wedding night, just as he was about to be with his wife, a beggar came to their door asking for food. Rather than dismissing him, the son invited the beggar into their home and fed him until he was fully satisfied. He then inquired if the beggar had a family and proceeded to provide food for them as well. The father, upon hearing this, praised Allah and informed his son about the dream.⁴⁷

This act of kindness, based on sharing food, earned Allah's favor and resulted in the extension of the son's life. The story underscores the profound virtue of sharing surplus food, particularly at feasts, with those in need. It embodies the Islamic principles of generosity and responsible consumption.

A responsible guest:

In addition to hosts, guests also bear responsibility for minimizing food waste. As it is prohibited to attend a feast uninvitedly, it is a responsibility of the invited guest to attend the feast. Uninformed non-attendance not only disappoints the host but also disrupts meticulous planning, potentially leading to surplus food that goes uneaten. Invited guests should accept invitations conscientiously and, if they commit to attending, should honor their commitment punctually. Should circumstances prevent attendance, guests are advised to inform the host

⁴⁷ Syed al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān b. Muḥammad, *Da'āim al-Islām*, vol. 2, 2 vols, *Zikr al-Raghā'ib fī Itā' al-Zakāh wa-al-Ṣadaqah* (Chapter of the Merits in Giving Zakah and Charity). (Mumbai: Daerat al Tabe' Wa Nashr, Aljameatus-Saifiyah, 1436H).

promptly so that adjustments can be made to the meal preparations? Many hosts take the extra step of confirming guests' attendance prior to the event to ensure efficient planning.

Islamic teachings emphasize the importance of responding to invitations with due respect and consideration, even for spontaneous gatherings. It is evident in of Imam Husain ibn Ali's (peace be upon him) counsel discussed earlier to a man not to decline an impromptu meal invitation he had received and attend it promptly.⁴⁸ As narrated from the Prophet, it is even recommended that a person fasting voluntarily (تطوع) to break the fast for an invitation to a feast, unless the invitation comes after midday.⁴⁹

The Prophetic tradition emphasizes that a guest arrives at a feast with his sustenance already provided for him:

ما من ضيف يحل بقوم الا ورزقه في حجره، فاذا نزل نزل برزقه، فاذا ارتحل ارتحل بذنوبهم^{51/50}

"No guest arrives to his host except that his sustenance is in his lap. When he descends, he descends with his sustenance, and when he departs, he departs with their sins."

This underscores the notion that the food prepared for the feast is derived from his share of Allah's provisions. Consequently, guests are encouraged to partake of the meal generously while ensuring they finish what they serve themselves. Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq advises that upon receiving an invitation, guests should embrace the meal wholeheartedly, thus honoring the host's intentions of hospitality. Furthermore, he addressed one of his companions whom he had invited for a meal, stating,

نما يعرف مودة الرجل لأخيه بجودة اكله لطعامه وانه ليعجبني الرجل يأكل من طعامي فيجيد الاكل يسرني بذلك⁵²
"He articulated that a man's affection for his brother is demonstrated by how earnestly he enjoys the meal presented by him, expressing his satisfaction when a person eats with sincerity to please him".

In the context of mitigating food waste, these instances underscore the guest's responsibility to ensure their presence does not contribute to unnecessary waste. Moreover, they urge guests to clean their plates, thereby relieving the host of the burden of managing leftovers.

On the other hand, Islamic teachings also demand modesty in expectations from part of the guest. He should not feel agitated by the modesty in the servings from the host. The Prophet's Seerah is of particular importance in this regard. He once said:

48 Syed al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān b. Muḥammad, Da'āim al-Islām, vol. 2, 2 vols, Zikr It'ām al-Ta'ām\ (Chapter of the Virtue of Feeding Others) (Mumbai: Daerat al Tabe' Wa Nashr, Aljamea-tus-Saifiyah, 1436H).

49 Syed al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān b. Muḥammad, Da'āim al-Islām, vol. 1, 2 vols, Zikr Şiyām al-Sunnah wa-al-Nāfilah (Chapter of Voluntary and Sunnah Fasting) (Mumbai: Daerat al Tabe' Wa Nashr, Aljamea-tus-Saifiyah, 1436H).

وعنه^{٤٩} ان رسول الله ﷺ قال : ما على الرجل اذا تكلف له اخوه طعاما فدعاه اليه وهو صائم ان يفطروااكل من طعام اخيه . ما لم يكن صيامه فريضة او في نذر، او كان قد مال النهار .

50 Similar Hadith has been also narrated by Ibn al-Jawzi, Tanqīḥ al-Taḥqīq (3/332); Al-Tayalisi (2317); Al-Tabarani in Al-Mu'jam al-Awsat (3240); Al-Bayhaqi (8436).

51 Syed al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān b. Muḥammad, Da'āim al-Islām, vol. 2, 2 vols, Zikr It'ām al-Ta'ām\ (Chapter of the Virtue of Feeding Others) (Mumbai: Daerat al Tabe' Wa Nashr, Aljamea-tus-Saifiyah, 1436H).

52 Syed al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān b. Muḥammad, Da'āim al-Islām, vol. 2, 2 vols, Zikr It'ām al-Ta'ām\ (Chapter of the Virtue of Feeding Others) (Mumbai: Daerat al Tabe' Wa Nashr, Aljamea-tus-Saifiyah, 1436H).

لو دعيت الى ذراع شاة لأجبت، ولو اهدي الي كراع لقبلت.⁵³

"If I were invited to [eat] a shank of a sheep, I would respond, and if a lower leg (kuraa) were gifted to me, I would accept it."

The Prophet (peace be upon him) exhibited a preference for the shank of the sheep, a choice influenced by its particular qualities. However, he also emphasized that even if someone invited him to partake in the كراع i.e. the lower part of the sheep's leg, he would graciously accept the invitation. It lays particular emphasis on modesty and flexibility in eating habits and advises against being a burden to others, especially when invited for a meal. A similar message is conveyed in another Prophetic narration, which underscores the honorable traits of the Nabiyyīn (prophets), Şiddīqīn (the truthful), Shuhadā' (the martyrs), and Şāliḥīn (the righteous)—namely, visiting one another for the sake of Allah. The Prophet elaborated that if such a visit is unplanned, the host is expected to offer whatever is available, even if it is nothing more than a sip of water. He further warned:

فمن احتشم ان يقرب الى اخيه ما تيسر عنده لم يزل في مقت الله يومه وليلته . ومن احتقر ما يقرب اليه اخوه لم يزل في مقت الله يومه وليلته⁵⁴

"Whoever refrains from offering his guest whatever is readily available remains under Allah's displeasure for the entire day and night? And whoever belittles what the host presents to him remains under Allah's displeasure for the entire day and night."

Although this hadith specifically addresses impromptu visits, it also reflects the broader Islamic principle of contentment and gratitude, demonstrating that a guest should be willing to accept even the simplest offering, such as water, with appreciation. The Prophet (peace be upon him) exemplified this principle in his visit to Jabir bin Abdullah's house. Jabir had nothing to serve except vinegar. Rather than refusing or expressing disappointment, the Prophet graciously accepted the vinegar and even praised it, saying, "Vinegar is a blessed condiment."⁵⁵

Jabir in turn counseled his guests with this advice when he hosted them. He offered them bread and vinegar, and said, "Eat, for I heard the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) say: 'Vinegar is a blessed condiment.' Destruction awaits those who disdain what is offered to them and those who refuse to share what they have with their guests."⁵⁶

Based on the Prophet's teaching, Hazrat Ali counsels both the host and the guest not to be burdensome:

وعن علي رضي الله عنه انه قال من تكرمه الرجل اخاه ان يقبل تحفته وان يتحفه بما عنده ، ولا يتكلف له ، فاني سمعت رسول الله ﷺ يقول : ان الله لا يحب المتكفين .⁵⁷

53 Syed al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān b. Muḥammad, Da'āim al-Islām, vol. 2, 2 vols, Zikr It'ām al-Ṭa'ām\ (Chapter of the Virtue of Feeding Others) (Mumbai: Daerat al Tabe' Wa Nashr, Aljamea-tus-Saifiyah, 1436H).

54 Syed al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān b. Muḥammad, Da'āim al-Islām, vol. 2, 2 vols, Zikr It'ām al-Ṭa'ām\ (Chapter of the Virtue of Feeding Others) (Mumbai: Daerat al Tabe' Wa Nashr, Aljamea-tus-Saifiyah, 1436H).

55 Ibn 'Adi al-Jurjani, Abu Ahmad. Al-Kamil fi Du'afa' al-Rijal. 1st ed. Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1997, vol. 4, Hadith no. 222.

56 Ahmad (14985); Muslim (2052); Abu Dawood (3820); At-Tirmidhi (1839); An-Nasa'i (3796); Ibn Majah (3317).

57 Syed al-Qāḍī al-Nu'mān b. Muḥammad, Da'āim al-Islām, vol. 2, 2 vols, Zikr al-Tabādul wa al-Tawāṣul (Mumbai: Daerat al Tabe' Wa Nashr, Aljamea-tus-Saifiyah, 1436H).

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One of the ways a man honors his brother is by accepting his gift and offering him what he has without imposing on himself. For I heard the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) say: 'Indeed, Allah does not love those who are burdensome to others.'"

He counsels the host that if a guest turns in spontaneously to his house, he should offer the best of the food he has. The guest in turn should honor his host by accepting what has been offered without being burdensome to him. This narration advises against extravagance in preparing food by avoiding unnecessary formality (takalluf), particularly when it results in waste. In the context of mitigating food waste, these instances underscore the guest's responsibility to ensure their presence does not contribute to unnecessary waste. Moreover, they urge guests to clean their plates, thereby relieving the host of the burden of managing leftovers.

Conclusion:

Food waste at feasts presents a pressing challenge with profound ethical, environmental, and social implications. Through an Islamic lens, this issue is not merely a logistical concern but a moral imperative rooted in divine guidance. The Quran and Sunnah emphasize food as an Allah's blessing, demanding mindful consumption, gratitude, and equitable distribution. While Islam encourages communal celebrations and hospitality, it simultaneously condemns extravagance (israf) and waste, advocating for moderation and responsibility.

The paper highlights key strategies derived from Islamic teachings to mitigate food waste. These include simplifying menus, regulating portion sizes, adopting sequential serving practices, and prioritizing communal dining—all exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) traditions. His emphasis on moderation, such as serving modest dishes like Hais and limiting wedding feasts to two days, underscores the balance between joyous celebration and ethical stewardship. The narrative of Prophet Sulayman's feasts further illustrates how abundance, when managed wisely through collective preparation and equitable distribution, can avoid waste while addressing hunger.

Guests and hosts alike share responsibility in this framework. Hosts are urged to avoid overcooking, plan thoughtfully, and redistribute leftovers as sadaqah (charity), while guests are reminded to attend punctually, avoid excess, and honor the host's efforts by minimizing waste. Initiatives like the Dawoodi Bohra community's Faizul Mawaid al Burhaniyah demonstrate the viability of communal kitchens in reducing waste and fostering food security, aligning with Prophetic models. Ultimately, Islamic teachings offer a holistic approach to food waste mitigation, harmonizing cultural practices with sustainability, ensuring that celebrations remain joyous yet conscientious. Through collective action rooted in faith, the global Muslim community can lead by example in turning the tide against food waste, one mindful feast at a time.