

FOOD & FAITH CONVERSATIONS

Foods Waste: A Religious Perspective

Food waste is an issue on many different levels. When food is wasted, the resources used to produce it are also lost. Those resources include the water, energy, labor, land and other items used to produce, prepare and serve safe and wholesome food.

According to the **Unites States Environmental Protection Agency** (EPA), 68% of the food we generate ends up in the landfill. However, food waste goes beyond being an environmental issue. Food waste is a social problem, as 37 million Americans each year struggle with food insecurity. It becomes an economic issue as food loss and waste totals \$161 billion a year.

Every major religion emphasizes the precious gift of food. We are reminded not to waste food but to share with others. What steps can we take as a profession to reduce food waste and encourage others to do the same? Get your inspiration by viewing the topic of food waste from a Christian, Jewish and Muslim perspective within this newsletter.

Enjoy the newsletter and remember, there is always a place at the table for you at RMIG! Share your talents and knowledge by contacting us at rmig@eatright.org.

IN THIS ISSUE

WELCOME NEW LEADERS

ACADEMY UPDATES

RMIG UPDATES

FOOD STEWARDS

**FOOD WASTE -
MUSLIM, CHRISTIAN, JEWISH
PERSPECTIVES**

RMIG MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

**MONTHLY RELIGIOUS
OBSERVANCES**

RECIPES

GOOD TO KNOW!

Religion Member Interest Group - Purpose Statement

The Religion Member Interest Group (RMIG) is a community of members interested in networking and enhancing their religious competency skills as it relates to nutrition and the ability to communicate with diverse audiences. RMIG supports multiple religious communities who bring together culturally diverse professionals interested in increasing cross-cultural awareness, competency, networking and reducing health disparities of their communities. Membership is inclusive of those who identify with a religious community or who otherwise have an interest in increasing cultural competency skills.

RMIG Leadership

YaQutullah Ibraheem Muhammad MS, RDN, LD, FAC-P/PM
Chair

Jessica Pearl MS, RD, CSSD, CSCS, CLT, CDN, FAND
Past Chair

Mariah Haroon RDN
Secretary

Yasmin Abdelsalam MS, RD, LDN
Nominating & Awards Committee Chair

Peg Gregson MPH, RD, LDN
Nominating & Awards Committee Member

Hiba Hamadeh MMedSci, RDN, LD
Professional Development Co-Chair

Kelly Moltzen OFS, MPH, RD
Professional Development Committee Co-Chair

Tia Jeffery, PhD, RD
Communications Committee Chair

Mary Angela Niester MPH, RD
Newsletter Chair

Amna Kashif RD (PNDS)
Newsletter Editor

Bushra Islam RDN
Diversity Liaison

Rita Brummett
Manager, DPG/MIG Relations



Welcome to our New RMIG Leaders!

Sharon Meier-Lutheran MSH, RDN, LDN, CLC - Incoming Chair

Jessica Pearl MS, RD, CSSD, CSCS, CLT, CDN, FAND - Treasurer

Rubina Hakeem PhD (UK), RD (UK), FafN (UK), FAND (US) - Incoming Membership Chair

Fathima Mirza RDN - Communications Committee, Incoming Website Coordinator

Destiny Matthews RDN - Incoming Secretary

Sarah Al-shwaf MA, RD, Communications Committee, Social Media Coordinator

Amna Kashif, RD (Pakistan) - Communications Committee



Academy Updates

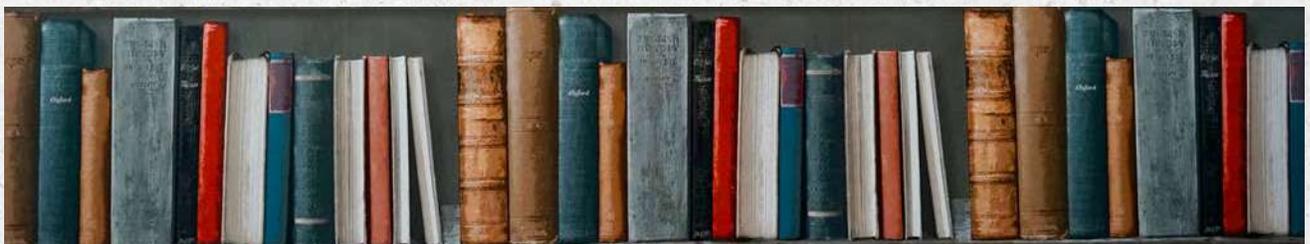
Public Policy - Save the Date

The Academy hosted a **virtual advocacy day on Tuesday, May 11** to get the word out on Capitol Hill about the forthcoming reintroduction of the MNT Act of 2021. We reached out to policy leaders and members of the Academy whose policymakers serve on committees of jurisdiction for the bill. Advocates met as a group with congressional offices to share more information about the MNT Act. A virtual meeting was held the evening of Monday, May 10 to prepare advocates for the event. Visit the Academy's **Public Policy page** to learn more.

ACEND Board Discontinues the Future Bachelor Demonstration Program

ACEND launched its **Future Education Model (FEM)** demonstration program pilot in 2017 and since has been collecting data to evaluate and monitor the success of the FEM Standards. Current data suggest the great benefit of competency-based education in preparing Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDNs), indicated by the number of programs that have applied to become a Future Education Model Graduate (FG) demonstration program, the pass rate on the registration exam for these programs, and the many benefits reported by faculty and students. This underlines the value of elevating the education of the RDN to the graduate level.

Over the past four years, there have been few applications for the Future Bachelor's (FB) Demonstration Program (<10% of total FEM applications) with less than 2% of total FEM students enrolled, suggesting limited support for a Nutrition and Dietetics Technician, Registered program at the bachelor's level; therefore, on March 8, 2021, the ACEND Board voted to discontinue the FB demonstration program. Discontinuation of the FB demonstration program was not a desired outcome; however, ACEND is committed to a thorough and honest evaluation of its FEM Standards and programs. ACEND will continue to accredit Didactic Programs in Dietetics (DPDs) as the undergraduate nutrition and dietetics degree and will assist all FB programs (accredited and in process) that want to transition to the DPD Standards. Furthermore, ACEND will continue to accept applications for FG programs in future cohorts of FEM demonstration program.



A decorative border at the top of the page featuring a wooden cutting board with various fruits including an orange, red grapes, a yellow lemon, and a green lime.

RMIG Updates

FNCE®2021 and RMIG Virtual Meet-up

FNCE® once again will be virtual and RMIG is currently planning a number of wonderful events, showcasing our unique position in the landscape of nutrition and dietetics.



Check out what we have so far:

- Our joint MIG session proposal, “Nourishing Our Communities Through A Pandemic: Stories Of Resilience From The Front Lines,” was accepted without revisions! Listen in as representatives from each MIG discuss RDNs in action during the pandemic.
- Pre- FNCE® 2021 Virtual Networking Zoom is being planned which will afford an opportunity for all of us to get together, share timely information and have fun!
- During FNCE® 2021, RMIG is considering having each religion host their own Zoom meet-up. Interested in getting involved? Let us know! Email rmig@eatright.org today.
- If you're attending FNCE® 2021, be sure to visit our virtual booth!

RMIG Collaborations

The **National Baptist Convention**, a membership driven religious organization for African Americans, recently reached out to the Academy to find a member who would work on shared deliverables for both groups. An RMIG member was identified and will assist both organizations in projects related to nutrition and health for this religious group. Stay tuned for more exciting news on this partnership!

It's Membership Renewal Time!

Look Closer at Academy Membership Savings

Membership Savings and Value

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 54 or more free CPEUs available annually in the <i>Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics</i> 	\$2,430 Value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compensation & Benefits Survey of the Dietetics Profession 	\$250 Value
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence Analysis Library* access 	\$250 Value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find a Nutrition Expert listing 	\$249 Value
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subscription to the <i>Journal</i> 	\$459 Value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nutrition Care Manual* subscription** 	\$167 Savings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FNCE* registration* 	\$150 Savings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> And much more! 	

Savings based on member vs. non-member, early-bird registration as of FNCE 2020.

**Savings based on new member vs. non-member subscription for one year.

Access to Exclusive Benefits



Dues vs. Value

Active Member Dues	\$234	Total Savings and Value	Over \$3000
--------------------	-------	-------------------------	-------------

Take Advantage of All This and More!

For more information on the value of Academy membership, or to join online, visit www.eatrightPRO.org/membervalue.

**RMIG Membership
Only \$10!**

US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA): Food Stewards

By: Mary Angela Niester, MPH, RD

All faith communities share a common understand of the importance of caring for their neighbors and protecting our shared environment. A great way to assist both is by teaching others about the impact of food waste. So, where do you start? First, check out the resources and articles available through the **Academy**. They have been focusing on "feeding people, not landfills" by encouraging smarter shopping techniques, reducing plate waste, deciphering food label "sell by" and "best by" codes and encouraging composting.

Another great resources, specific to those in faith-based communities in through the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Their **Food Stewardship education program** was designed to engage faith communities on the importance of protecting the environment through reducing food waste. You, or another faith leader, can serve as a food steward and guide your faith organization to reduce the amount of food wasted, learn how to donate excess food, and/or compost as a meaningful way to protect the environment and support your community.

A **Food Steward Toolkit** is available to download that provides steps to:

- How to launch a Food Stewards team
- Lead faith communities in food recovery efforts, in their homes and place of worship
- Recover and donate good quality excess or unused food
- Better plan for meals or events
- Smart storage guidelines
- Composting how-to's and resources

There are also videos and Food Recovery Challenges to guide your faith community in making changes and a helpful calendar on what food waste strategies to focus on each month. The EPA is always looking for success stories. If you have one to share, don't forget to also share it with RMIG! Post it on our Discussion Board and send it to us - rmig@eatright.org.



Graphic courtesy of the US EPA: www.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food/food-stewards

Food Waste Prevention – a choice or an obligation?

By Amna Kashif, RD (Pakistan); IAAND - Pakistan, Member RMIG

A mentee visits his mentor. They eat together on the *dastarkhwan* (1). After the meal is over and the food is taken away, the mentee started rolling up the cloth. The mentor asked: "What are you doing?"

The mentee replied, "I am rolling up the *dastarkhwan* to shake it off in an appropriate place."

The mentor said, "Do you know how to roll up the *dastarkhwan*?"

Mentee: "Is this also an art?"

Mentor: "Yes, this is also an art and that is why I asked whether you know how to do it or not."

The mentee requested to be taught this art.

And so, they separated the leftover pieces of meat, gathered the bones, the large pieces of bread were separated from the smaller pieces into two piles. Then the mentor said, "I have set a particular place for each. The pieces of meat are kept in a certain place: every day a cat comes there and eats them. There is a separate place for the bones, the dog knows that place and he come there for the bones, and I put the larger pieces of bread where the birds come and benefit from these, whereas the smaller pieces of bread are placed next to an ant's burrow and it becomes their food."

The mentee was the eminent scholar of Islam, *Mufti Shafi Usmani* and his mentor was the esteemed teacher of many respectable Scholars, i.e., *Maulana Syed Asghar Hussain* (famously known as *Mian Sahab*). (2)

After all of the leftover food was placed in its designated place, Mian Sahab said: "All these things are the sustenance of Allah Almighty, no part of it should be wasted."

Respect of every morsel of food is highly valued in Islam. Licking his finger after finishing a meal (3) was a *sunnah* (4) of the Prophet Muhammad (May Allah honour him and grant him peace). Looking at it from the lens of food wastage at home, we see how Islam teaches us to control wastage at the ground level. Picking up the bite of food that may have fallen (5) while eating, dusting it and eating it is highly appreciated (and if it is no longer edible then it should be given to an animal or added to compost). If this much care is given to the morsels of leftover food (often not even considered food by some of us) then imagine the care one must exercise in ensuring that no food is wasted during preparation, cooking, serving and eating.

Today, mindful eating practices focus on eating slowly and with presence of mind. One of the reasons is that the satiety signal is received by the brain sometime after the stomach is actually full. So, in reality by the time we feel satiated we have already entered the red zone of over-eating. The sunnah of eating up to 2/3 of your stomach and leaving 1/3 for air (6) implies that one should stop eating when some vestiges of hunger are still felt. This not only serves as a golden principle for portion control but also in controlling food waste.

(1) A *dastarkhwān* or *dastarkhān*, is the name used across South Asia and Central Asia to refer to the traditional space where food is eaten. The term may refer to the cloth which is spread on the ground, floor, or table and is used as a sanitary surface for food.

(2) Mufti Taqi Usmani, *Zikr o Fikr*, Pg 71 accessed online at:

<https://archive.org/details/ZikrOFikrByShaykhMuftiTaqiUsmani/page/n69/mode/2up>

(3) Muslim- *Shamail Tirmidhi*

(4) In Islam, *Sunnah*, are the traditions and practices of the Islamic prophet, Muhammad, that constitute a model for Muslims to follow.

(5) Muslim- *Ibn Majah*

(6) Dr Abdul Hai, *Uswae Rasool Akram*, Pg 152, Al Qadir Printing Press

“

"In 2019, the 74th United Nations General Assembly designated 29 September as the International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste, recognizing the fundamental role that sustainable food production plays in promoting food security and nutrition." (7)

However, fourteen hundred years ago Allah Almighty with His infinite knowledge and wisdom ordained His believers to adopt moderation, and made them accountable for the correct use of resources created for their benefit in this world.

A famous hadith of Prophet Muhammad (May Allah honour him and grant him peace): "Do not waste water even if performing ablution on the bank of a fast-flowing large river (8) "lays the principle of preventing waste in all aspects of one's life, including food and drink."

According to the United Nations: "Reducing food loss and waste requires the attention and actions of all, from food producers, to food supply chain stakeholders, to food industries, retailers and consumers." (9)

It is also worth mentioning that preventing food waste at a global level and achieving Zero Hunger is not a pipe dream. It is absolutely possible. In fact, history tells us that not only once but twice, the world experienced a state where poverty was zero and hence, we can safely assume that if hunger was present, it was voluntary and not a result of lack of food.

Yes, I am talking about the caliphate of Hazrat Umer and his great grandson Hazrat Umer bin Abdul Aziz. (10)

Both these leaders ruled over half of the world at a time when communication still relied on horses and human messengers. Yet, the people under their rule (both Muslims and Non-Muslims) lived a life of tranquility where people eligible for zakat (poor-due/charity) were difficult to find.

The caliphs did not set out for a Zero Hunger world, but they achieved just that. Their focus was the implementation of the just system of Islam and to spread Allah's message by acting on His commands. Thus, this is evidence that Islam is not restricted to a set of rituals rather it encompasses our social and individual life and provides us with the framework of success for both.

Food Waste is prevalent in both the developed and developing countries with another 83 to 131 billion people at risk of food insecurity due to the pandemic (11), it is high time that we come out of our state of negligence and practice moderation in our food purchasing, storage, preparation, consumption and mindfully sort out our leftovers. In conclusion, for the believers of Islam prevention of food waste is not an option rather a religious obligation!

(7) International Day of Food Loss Awareness: <https://www.un.org/en/observances/end-food-waste-day> accessed on 18th April 2021

(8) Al- Tirmidhi

(9) International Day of Food Loss Awareness: <https://www.un.org/en/observances/end-food-waste-day> accessed on 18th April 2021

(10) Mahmud Adès a Ayuba (2016); Islamic Economic System, Poverty and Insurgency: From Zakat distribution to Capacity Building; International Journal of Islamic Economics and Finance Studies, November 2016, Vol 2, Issue 3

(11) <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2287770/food-waste> (accessed on 16th April 2021)

A Christian Perspective on Preventing Food Waste

By: Sharon Meier Lutheran, MSH,RDN,LDN,CLC

I was at work one day in Jacksonville, FL, and saw in the kitchen's refrigerator the asparagus that was going to be served was a product of Peru. One of the chefs where I work was born in China, grew up in Peru and immigrated to the US. Just as chef had traveled many miles to live in Florida, the asparagus had traveled approximately 2,775 miles to be eaten.

- Although some of the food produced is eaten, food waste can come from not eating food or food that has spoiled. The USDA estimates one third of available food goes uneaten through loss or waste and adds up to 133 billion pounds of food a year. Most of this food ends up in landfills and 14% of methane producing emissions in the US come from landfills. Food waste affects nutrition and health, environment, and climate change. The World Food Programme estimates all the food produced but never eaten would be sufficient to feed two billion people. Cutting global food waste in half by 2030 is one of the UN's top priorities. In developing countries, 40% of food loss occurs at post-harvest and processing levels. In industrial countries, 40% of food loss occurs at retail and consumer levels.

Food waste is not a current topic, both the Old and New Testament have a lot to say about food waste. The Holy Bible tells us that God created heaven and earth, every kind of living creature, and every seed-bearing plant and every seed-bearing fruit to be your food in the Book of Genesis. This is known as the Story of Creation. From Pope Francis' Laudati Si, "They suggest that human life is grounded in three fundamental and closely intertwined relationships: with God, with our neighbour and with the earth itself." God created the earth for everyone, not just a select few. In the Book of Leviticus 23:22, "And when you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap your field right up to its edge, nor shall you gather the gleanings after your harvest. You shall leave them for the poor and for the sojourner: I am the Lord your God." Even in ancient times, it was encouraged to give food to others that had less. The Book of Ezekiel, Chapter 16 tells the Parable of Infidelity. In Ezekiel 16:49 "Behold, this was the guilt of your sister Sodom: she and her daughters had pride, excess of food, and prosperous ease, but did not aid the poor and needy." Eating in excess also occurred in the past and was looked down on.

In the New Testament, the Book of John tells the story of the Multiplication of the Loaves. One day when Passover was near, Jesus feed 5,000 men plus women and children with 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish. In John 6:12 "And when they had eaten their fill, he told his disciples, "Gather up the leftover fragments, that nothing may be lost." Jesus miraculously feed thousands of people and still had leftover food to fill 12 wicker baskets. Nothing was to go to waste. Christian communities have a role to play in ecological education.

So what can be done so future generations can have access to enough food, clean water, and safe environment? Here are some ideas to start:

- Buy less food this week at the supermarket this week to decrease food waste and spoilage.
- Buy locally. Visit your local farmers' market and meet the growers of your food.
- Make all your own food this week from whole foods.
- Eat all the food you bought this week before it spoils.
- Save leftovers to eat at another meal.

(My mom once saved three peas to eat at another meal).

- Compost food you can't eat. Learn how [here](#).
- Educate yourself on companies that you buy food from.
Do you agree with their principals?
- Educate people on food waste, how to read date labels and food safety.



A Christian Perspective on Preventing Food Waste (con't)

- Encourage local supermarkets, restaurants, and hospitals to donate to local food banks.
- Meet migrant farm workers to see what their life is like. See if a local nonprofit works with migrant farm workers.
- Discuss with legislators federal food policies that enhance liability protections for food donations, standardize and clarify expiration date labels, and publish food safety guidance for food donations.
- Support international efforts to promote new farming techniques on production and food storage such as WFP Zero Hunger.
- Support national and international efforts to provide clean water and sanitary services among the poor. It is estimated 30- 40 percent of Navajo Nation members don't have access to running water in their homes.

Finally, Pope Francis has the following prayer for our earth:

All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe
and in the smallest of your creatures.
You embrace with your tenderness all that exists.
Pour out upon us the power of your love,
that we may protect life and beauty.
Fill us with peace, that we may live
as brothers and sisters, harming no one.
O God of the poor,
help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth,
so precious in your eyes.
Bring healing to our lives,
that we may protect the world and not prey on it,
that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction.
Touch the hearts
of those who look only for gain
at the expense of the poor and the earth.
Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,
to be filled with awe and contemplation,
to recognize that we are profoundly united
with every creature
as we journey towards your infinite light.
We thank you for being with us each day.
Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle
for justice, love and peace.



References:

"Laudato Si" (2015). Retrieved from the [Vatican website](#)

"Why Should We Care About Food Waste." (2021) Retrieved from [USDA website - care about food waste](#)

"Winning on Reducing Food Waste." (2021) Retrieved from [USDA website- reducing food waste](#)

"5 Facts about Food Waste and Hunger." (2020) Retrieved from [World Food Programme website](#)

Food Waste from a Jewish Perspective

By Susan Krantz, MA, RD, CDCES

Food loss and food waste happens at many levels of the food supply chain. And the growth of our human species all over the world has contributed to environmental changes as part of the “Anthropocene Epoch,” when humans have become the dominant force on our planetary climate. That, in turn, has affected our food system.¹

Bal Tashchit: Do Not Waste

In his book “Waste Not: A Jewish Environmental Ethic,” Tanhum S. Yoreh, an assistant professor at the School of Environment at the University of Toronto, often refers to the Jewish concept of bal tashchit, which literally means “do not destroy,” but in practice means “do not waste.” Bal tashchit comes from the Torah, the Hebrew Bible, which prohibits the destruction of fruit trees. Yoreh, who traces bal tashchit from its biblical origin to the opinions of contemporary Jewish environmentalists as a reason not to waste most resources, especially food, considers bal tashchit as the heart of the Jewish environmental ethic.²

Deuteronomy 20:19 “When you besiege a city for many days to wage war against it to capture it, you shall not destroy its trees by wielding an ax against them, for you may eat from them, but you shall not cut them down. Is the tree of the field a man, to go into the siege before you?”³

Deuteronomy 20:20 “However, a tree you know is not a food tree, you may destroy and cut down, and you shall build bulwarks against the city that makes war with you, until its submission.”³

Rabbi Yonatan Neril, founder and director of the Interfaith Center for Sustainable Development, discusses many of these commentators including rabbis in the Talmud who said that bal tashchit also prohibits directly or indirectly destroying resources that are useful to people, including energy, clothing, water and money.⁴ Maimonides (1135- 1204) explained bal tashchit prohibits destroying household goods, tearing clothes, demolishing buildings, or wasting food.⁴

Reduce waste with a plant-based diet

Richard Schwartz, who has been a vegan for several years and a vegetarian for more than 40 years, explains in his recent book, “Vegan Revolution: Saving Our World, Revitalizing Judaism,” that the “Torah mandate of bal tashchit is consistent with veganism, since animal-centered diets when compared to plant-based diets require the use and depletion of far more land, water, energy, and other agricultural resources.”⁵ In this Anthropocene Epoch, many Jewish environmentalists feel that we should be better stewards of our Earth’s resources, especially our food.

References

1. Fanzo J, Bellows AL, Spiker, ML, Thorne-Lyman, AL, Bloem MW. The importance of food systems and the environment for nutrition. *Am J Clin Nutr* 2021; 113(1): 7-16. Accessed March 18, 2021 from <https://academic.oup.com/ajcn/article/113/1/7/6000654?login=true>
2. Yoreh TS. *Waste not: A Jewish environmental ethic*. Albany: State of University of N.Y., 2019.
3. Quotations from the Torah are taken from “The Complete Tanakh” (Tanach)— Hebrew Bible: The Jewish Bible with a Modern English Translation and Rashi’s Commentary” https://www.chabad.org/library/bible_cdo/aid/63255/jewish/The-Bible-with-Rashi.htm
4. Neril, Y. *Summoning the Will Not to Waste*. Jewcology.com. <https://jewcology.org/resources/bal-tashchit-summoning-the-will-not-to-waste-longerarticle/> Published February 22, 2012. Accessed March 18, 2021.
5. Schwartz, RH. *Vegan revolution: saving our world, revitalizing Judaism*. Brooklyn, NY: Lantern Publishing & Media; 2020.

Jewish and Interfaith Resources on Reducing Waste

By Susan Krantz, MA, RD, CDCES

Jewish Vegetarians of North America. Supporting efforts to spread vegetarianism through Judaism. Includes recipes and shopping lists.

Jewish Eco Seminars. Provides seminars and educational programs on ecological awareness throughout North America and Israel.

Shamayim: Jewish Animal Advocacy. A non-profit organization that offers programs, campaigns and educational opportunities about veganism.

Interfaith Sustainability. Discusses the connection between religion and ecology and mobilizes faith communities to act.

Planetary Health Collective. An organization committed to providing food and nutrition professionals with the knowledge and skills to enact climate justice through equitable food policy advocacy, community organization and promotion of ecologically centered culinary and/or nutrition practice.



Addressing Food Waste - Holy Books

Islam - "It is He Who has brought into being gardens, the cultivated and the wild, and date-palms, and fields with produce of all kinds, and olives and pomegranates, similar (in kind) and variegated. Eat of their fruit in season, but give (the poor) their due on harvest day. And do not waste, for God does not love the wasteful." (Quran 6:141)

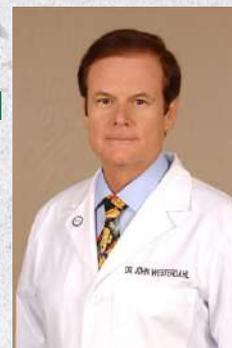
Christian - "When they had all had enough to eat, Jesus said to his disciplines, 'Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted'" (John 6:12)

Jewish - "When you besiege a city for many days to wage war against it to capture it, you shall not destroy its trees by wielding an ax against them, for you may eat from them, but you shall not cut them down. Is the tree of the field a man, to go into the siege before you? However, a tree you know is not a food tree, you may destroy and cut down, and you shall build bulwarks against the city that makes war with you, until its submission." (Deuteronomy 20:19-20)

RMIG Spotlight

John Westerdahl, PhD, MA, MPH, RDN, CNS, FAND, DipACLM

By John Westerdahl, PhD, MA, MPH, RDN, CNS, FAND, DipACLM



As a man of science and of faith, John's spiritual journey first led him to become a Christian in the early 1970's in Southern California, through the church and television ministry of Dr. Robert H. Schuller. He worked with Dr. Schuller's popular television ministry, the Hour of Power, at that time recognized as the most watched televised Christian worship service in the world. Due to his passionate interest in both the study of the Bible, and the study of nutrition, John later joined and remains an active member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, particularly in the areas of health ministry. The Adventist church's strong emphasis on biblical Christian teachings and values, as well as its emphasis on wholistic healthy living which includes the Bible's natural health laws and vegetarian nutrition appealed to Dr. Westerdahl and played a key role in inspiring him to pursue the field of nutrition as a career. As part of the church's worldwide nutrition mission and outreach, John and his daughter Jasmine (a newly minted RDN) are currently working to expand the ministry of the Adventist Nutrition and Dietetics International Association.

In addition to his RDN and CNS credentials, Dr. John Westerdahl is an American College of Lifestyle Medicine Board Certified Lifestyle Medicine Professional, Board Certified Anti-Aging Health Practitioner, Master Herbalist, Health Scientist, and Health Educator. A graduate of Loma Linda University School of Public Health his B.S., M.P.H., and Ph.D. degrees are in the fields of nutrition and health education. With an interest in spiritual wellness, John also received a M.A. degree in religion from the California Graduate School of Theology. His M.A. thesis for his degree in religion was, "Biblical Perspectives of Health and Wellness".

John is currently in private practice as a nutrition consultant specializing in plant-based nutrition, lifestyle medicine, nutrigenomics, longevity, and anti-aging. He previously served as the Director of the Bragg Health Foundation in Santa Barbara, California, a Director of Wellness & Lifestyle Medicine and Nutritional Services for Adventist Health Castle Medical Center and simultaneously as the Health Director for the Hawaii Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in Hawaii, and Director of the Murad Inclusive Health Center and Murad Inclusive Health Medical Group in Los Angeles. He was the Nutrition Editor of Veggie Life Magazine and has served as a health scientist and product research and development nutritionist for several health and natural food companies including Shaklee Corporation, Bragg Live Food Products, Dr. McDougall's Right Foods, and Murad, Inc. His research has led to the development of several state-of-the-art food, nutritional, and herbal products and formulations that have been marketed worldwide. He is also a former assistant nutritionist to two-time Nobel Prize winning scientist, Dr. Linus Pauling at the Linus Pauling Institute of Science and Medicine. John is a Past Chair of the Vegetarian Nutrition Dietetic Practice Group of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. His weekly national radio talk show, Health & Longevity, is broadcast on the LifeTalk Radio Network on over 70 Christian radio stations affiliated with the Seventh-day Adventist Church organization.

To learn more about Dr. Westerdahl and the Seventh-day Adventist Church, visit his websites at: www.LongevityRDN.com and www.HealthAndLongevityRadio.com



Good to Know!

Improve health and well-being for all with Healthy People 2030

Since 1980, the Healthy People initiative has set goals and measurable objectives to improve health and well-being in the United States. The initiative's fifth edition, Healthy People 2030, builds on knowledge gained over the past 4 decades to address current and emerging public health priorities and challenges.

An interdisciplinary team of subject matter experts developed national health objectives and targets for the next 10 years. These objectives focus on the most high-impact public health issues, and reflect an increased focus on the social determinants of health and how the conditions where people live, work, and play affect their health and well-being.

By using Healthy People 2030 in your work, you can help improve health nationwide! Objectives are organized into intuitive topics so you can easily find data that's relevant to your work. And Healthy People 2030 provides evidence-based resources and tools you can use to set strategies for reaching Healthy People targets in your community, state, or organization. Start exploring Healthy People 2030 today!

https://health.gov/sites/default/files/2020-08/ODPHP_HP2030_HowtoUseHP.pdf



Leftovers to Reduce Food Waste

Looking for resources for yourself, your clients or your patients on how to use leftovers and those "extras" found in the fridge before they go bad? Check out these useful resources!

The Foodie Dietitian <https://karalydon.com/recipes/25-creative-ways-to-use-leftovers/>

Brooks Health <https://www.brook.health/ways-dietitians-reduce-food-waste/>

Food Waste Videos <https://www.fda.gov/food/consumers/food-waste-animations>

University of Illinois Cooperative Extension

https://extension.illinois.edu/sites/default/files/find_creative_ways_to_use_leftovers.pdf

Disclaimer: The Religion MIG or the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics does not endorse the content, products or services on other websites. RMIG does not accept solicited requests to become a resource.



Religious Observances and Holy Days - May to August

May

Ramadan (Muslim) began April 13 and ends May 12-13: The ninth and most sacred month of the year. During Ramadan Muslims fast, pray, try to perform good deeds, and abstain from pleasures to grow closer to God. Eid-al-Fitr, meaning "breaking the fast" occurs on May 12-13, the last day of Ramadan marking the end of a month of fasting.

Shavout (Jewish) May 16-18: Is one of the Three Pilgrimage Festivals which commemorates the receipt of the Five Books of the Torah on Mount Sinai. Shavout is celebrated seven weeks after the second Passover seder.

Pentecost (Christian) May 23: Occurs 50 days after Easter and commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples and the apostles. This is the completion of the work of redemption, the fullness of grace to the Church and the gift of faith for all nations.

June

Feast of Corpus Christi (Christian) June 3: Celebrated 60 days after Easter, the feast of Corpus Christi is a Latin Rite liturgical solemnity celebrating the belief in the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ and His real presence in the Eucharist. Eucharistic processions are common through neighborhoods around where a parish is located.

Fast of Tammuz (Jewish) June 27: This is the start of a three week fast to remember the destruction of Jerusalem and the two Holy Temples. The fast commemorates five tragic events including Moses breaking the tablets and the Apostomas burning the Torah.

July

Tish'a B'av (Jewish) July 30: This is the saddest day on the Jewish calendar in which fasting, deprivation and prayer take place. This day is the culmination of the Three Weeks (beginning with the Fast of Tammuz) and marks the destruction of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem.

Eid-al-Adha (Muslim) July 31 - August 3: One of two key Eid's (Celebration Festivals) in Islam. This celebration commemorates the day the Prophet Ibrahim's devotion to Allah (SWT) and the readiness to sacrifice his son Ismail.

August

Islamic New Year (Muslim) August 10: Falling on the first day of the Muharram month, this day focuses on the Prophet Muhammed's flight from Mecca to Medina. Muslims gather in mosques for prayer and peace and to listen to holy readings from the Quran and reflect on one's mortality and passing of time.

Feast of the Assumption (Christian) August 15: This Holy Day recognizes the Blessed Mother's (Mary) end of earthly life and assumption, body and soul, into Heaven. It was by the power of God that the Virgin Mary was assumed, illustrating the truth about Christ's promise of eternal life and the resurrection of the faithful.

Ashura (Muslim) August 20: This day falls on the 10th day of the first month (Muharram) of the Islamic lunar calendar. It is a day of public mourning when Shiite Muslims commemorate the death of the Prophet Muhammed's grandson, Imam Hussein.



Recipes: Tortilla Snack



Tortilla Snack

By: Fathima Mirza, RD

Search your refrigerator for leftover chicken, vegetables and other ingredients for this easy to make and enjoyed by everyone!

Ingredients:

Nacho or Tortilla chips : 20-30

Marinara sauce

Vegetables : carrots, bell peppers (green, red, orange), Olives, Onions (diced)

Chicken : boiled and shredded

Mozzarella cheese.

Directions:

Spray baking dish with oil. Spread Nacho chips (can use any tortilla chips or Corn chips). Spread marinara sauce evenly covering the chips. Add diced vegetables, cheese. Add one more layer of Nacho chips, vegetables and cheese. You can add one more layer. Preheat the oven at 350 F and bake for 20 minutes. You can add other meat alternatives. Enjoy it hot. Quick snack idea for picnic.





Recipes Using Healing Foods from the Bible

By: John Westerdahl, PhD, MA, MPH, RDN, FAND, DipACLM

Extra Virgin Olive Oil and Lemon Juice Salad Dressing

6 tablespoons organic extra virgin olive oil

2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

1 clove garlic, finely minced

1 teaspoon sea salt

In a small bowl, mix all the ingredients vigorously with a whisk

Makes about ½ cup, enough for 4 – 6 salads

Hummus

2 cups cooked or canned garbanzo beans (chickpeas)

1/3 cup of fresh lemon juice

¼ cup tahini

2 cloves garlic

1 tablespoon organic extra virgin olive oil

1 teaspoon sea salt

½ teaspoon onion powder

¼ cup water (or as needed for desired consistency)

Fresh parsley, chopped (for garnish)

Combine all the ingredients in a blender and blend until very smooth. Add additional water if necessary. Garnish with chopped parsley.

Makes four ½ cup servings

Ezekiel 4:9 Bread – A Recipe from the Bible

“Also take for yourself wheat, barley, beans, lentils, millet, and spelt; put them into a vessel, and make bread of them yourself.” Ezekiel 4:9

For an Ezekiel 4:9 bread recipe made more in the traditional and authentic Bible way, visit: www.wholegrainconnection.org/id5.html

From Dr. Westerdahl's booklet, HEALING FOODS OF THE BIBLE, published by It Is Written, P.O. Box 6, Chattanooga, TN 37401 (Request a FREE copy of this booklet at 800-253-3000)

REFLECTIONS ON WHAT WE EAT

BY Irma Martinez

Editors Note: This is an excerpt of the full article that can be found on the [RMIG website](#).

People eat mostly when they are hungry correct? However, have you felt hunger pain lately? Do you eat because you are tempted; enticed by others or by yourself craving for food? Are you driven to eat by feelings such as anxiety, depression or simply because you are bored? Have you considered messages from your parents or grandparents teaching us to “clean the plate”? This advice translates to you shall finish EVERYTHING that was served on your plate.

Eating healthy is a process and we need to learn to understand our body's hunger and satiety cues. This process begins early in our life when we are born. We think that parents are required to teach the baby how to feed and how much; but it is the opposite. The babies are teaching their needs to the parents; when to feed and how to feed, and, when it is time to do something different. Sometimes as parents we overlook hunger and satiety cues; as a result, the babies tend to accommodate according to what the parents are teaching them. We must allow the babies to teach us so that as parents we can accommodate the infant's needs.

Likewise, we have internal signals or cues that are innate, and, the Holy Spirit is the one that guides us, protects us and counsels us. Let us learn to hear that internal voice that is telling us what the right thing is to do in all the areas of our life, including healthy eating.

The Bible has several statements regarding health as the person's mind is interrelated with the body. When the body is not functioning well, it affects the mind and the spirit.

“Beloved, I pray that in all things thou may prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospered” III John 1:2

We shall follow the principle that our God is teaching us in Luke 4:4 “and Jesus answered unto him, it is written, Man shall not live by bread alone”

We often don't think about food in spiritual terms; we eat three meals or more a day, we have gatherings, celebrations, fellowship around food. Likewise, most of us think about the unhealthy choices in non-spiritual ways; that is the reason we just accept it as part of our daily living and avoid accepting that food addictions are part of who we are. Let us start changing our minds around food and focus more on reaching the purpose we have in God.

Verse of the day: “There hath not temptation taken you but such as man can bear: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation make also the way of escape, that ye may be able to endure it” I Corinthians:13

REFERENCES:

1. <https://www.faithhealthtransformation.org/resources-and-toolkits/health-topics/food-and-nutrition/just-eating-curriculum/>- is a curriculum of Practicing our Faith at the Table
2. Book: “Breaking the Strongholds of Food” by Michael L. Brown © 2017