



Fatwa no. 15433

Q: In our restaurants we only prepare the quantity of food which is expected to be sold on the same day. All praise be to Allah, for most days we do not have any extra food. Nevertheless, some days we have some extra food and regrettably

(Part No : 13, Page No: 223)

we are ordered to throw it all away with the garbage. The confusing matter is that not all food is of the same degree of frailty. Rather, some of it does not change for more than twelve or twenty four hours let alone eleven hours. Amongst these kinds of food are chickens and fowl which do not change because I instruct workers to keep them in refrigerators for eleven hours which is the period for which the restaurant is closed and that I think will not cause the food to be harmed in summer or in winter. This is ascertained because we keep such food in good cold refrigerators and freezers and sell it next morning before we sell the rest of the food. It may be worth mentioning that when customers ask about this food and its date etc., we tell them the truth openly and give

them the right of choice whether to buy the food or not. We would like to inquire about the following:

1- Is throwing extra food away with the garbage permissible or not, bearing in mind that we are ordered to throw away all extra food with no exception? Is it permissible to keep the food, as I do, so long as its taste does not change, and it is not harmful because of its well-keeping?

2- Regarding other kinds of food, we throw away rice by the end of the working day because we know that it will not be eatable as its shape changes by storage. We thus throw it away and close the restaurant, in case you say: "Throwing away good food with the garbage is Haram (prohibited) and that other people die of hunger; why do you not distribute this extra food amongst the needy people in your city?" We will reply: "As you know (may Allah safeguard you), the restaurant closes late at night - roughly at twelve p.m. - we would not find any body to give them the food. Moreover, knocking on

(Part No : 13, Page No: 224)

people's doors at night at such an hour will put us in big trouble." On the other hand, in case you say: "Keep it as you keep other food", I will say: "I am an educated and responsible person and I know that if we had kept it for more than fifteen hours i.e. until after noon, it would have caused many problems for us with the authorities at the municipality. In addition, rice differs from other kinds of food with regard to its degree of frailty as we have mentioned above for its shape but not taste changes by storage. Grains of rice are split and thus can not be sold. The question is: Am I considered a sinner by throwing the food away with the garbage?

Provide me with your beneficial answer please and guide me to the proper measure to be done with such extra food so that we avoid sinning and Allah is pleased with us and blesses our provision and food. May Allah reward you with the best.

A: It is impermissible to sell or throw away the restaurants' extra edible food and meat that the municipality forbids selling so long as it can be benefited from. However, such food can be given to the needy people as a sort of Sadaqah (voluntary charity) either by giving it to them directly or through charitable associations.

May Allah grant us success! May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and Companions!

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