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Perspektif



Food Waste is a Constant Battle in Our Community

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As a result, these organizations and centres must redistribute the food already delivered to them. This wastes time and human resources because they must send food elsewhere and clean up afterwards.

*We frequently hear,
"Give what you have
best", for sadaqah.*

*In this case, however,
we should ask the
organization what
they require the most.*

*Is it food, grocery
items, fund or
human resources?*

I'm always curious about food waste, especially during Ramadan, when we have the Ramadan bazaar, iftar programme, and food drives. This issue has been raised year after year, and the waste has increased yearly. People frequently overspend on Iftar. Some food, however, ended up in the trash. Furthermore, food bazaar vendors often prepare more than is required, resulting in food waste. Some may argue that there was no food waste, as the vendors donated the excess food to non-governmental organizations (NGOs), mosques, or welfare centres. However, when the vendors delivered the food after Iftar, most organizations had prepared their meals or had broken their fast. Thus, resulting in excess food in the organization ends.

Furthermore, individuals and companies also donate food during Ramadan. The organization may receive more than one food donation in a day. They are hesitant to say no or reject food donations because they fear that if they decline the offer, people will stop donating food to them.

This way, we can reduce unnecessary waste, making our sadaqah more meaningful. As for the NGOs or welfare centre manager or person in charge, they should take action by beginning to say no, providing guidelines, and educating givers on the reasons they refuse food donations at a specific time.

Meanwhile, we should also take proactive steps to address this issue. Either by sharing foods with others, especially when we have more than we need or by making a grocery list to avoid wasting money by buying the same item twice or more. We can also locate a food bank to donate excess food before it goes to waste. Besides that, we can make a new recipe out of leftovers or freeze them for later use. It is disheartening to see so much good food go to waste when so many people still struggle to get a decent meal every day.

Too much on our plate

The amount of edible food waste dumped in Malaysia has been consistently high over the past three years.

Year	Solid waste* generated in Malaysia (tonnes per day) *including food waste	Food waste (tonnes per day)	Types of food waste (tonnes per day)	
			Inedible (eg. bones and fruit skins)	Edible (eg. leftover meat and vegetables)
2019	38,120	16,964	12,893	4,071
2020	38,294	17,041	12,952	4,089
2021	38,219	17,007	12,926	4,081

Source: Solid Waste Management and Public Cleansing Corporation (SWCorp)

TheStar graphics



According to SWCorp Malaysia, Malaysians generated **17,007 tonnes** of food waste daily in 2021.

We can expect that the amount of food waste will rise.

Even with the introduction and enforcement of the Solid Waste and Public Cleansing Management Act 2007 (Act 672) in certain states beginning 1 September 2015, which requires all residents and business owners to separate or categorize their solid waste, it failed to serve its purpose. People may remember and pay more attention to the act if the penalties are severe and the fine is high. This act helps to reduce the amount of waste in landfills because the trash can be recycled or composted.

Malaysians must understand the importance of waste management and how to reduce it. However, we do not consider it a way of life which contributes to an increase in yearly waste. An expanded promotional campaign should include multiple platforms.

Not only should we educate the next generation, but we should also make this a way of life and habit; hoping there is a wave of change by creating awareness or trends to reduce waste. Social media influencers have shared their method of reducing food waste by composting it and feeding it to the chicken. It is a suitable food chain cycle because we can also use compost to grow vegetables. People would be eager to reduce food waste and incorporate it into their lifestyle if they gained information and knowledge through current social media platforms such as TikTok or any other appropriate medium.