

Smart Food for Future Sustainability: Halal and *Tayyib* Perspectives

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“Worldwide Smart Food Industry to 2027 — Integrated Applications Play A Key Role in the Smart Farming Ecosystem”, a headline used by Research and Markets on the 3rd of May 2022 enlightens readers about the analysis of the food ecosystem and the role of technologies in lowering costs, increasing revenues, and optimising overall value throughout the ecosystem. The International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (2020) reported that millets, sorghum, and grain legumes are incredibly nutrient-dense and climate-smart crops that give smallholder farmers the chance to make a decent livelihood. Future smart food (FSF) refers to neglected and underutilised species which are nutritionally rich, climate resilient, economically viable, and regionally adaptive (Li & Siddique, 2018). In the face of climate change and water scarcity, it is critical to equip the agriculture sector with climate-resilient approaches and crops that can withstand more stressful environments in order to maintain food production, meet increasing demand, combat nutrition and health issues, and construct a sustainable livelihood for farmers (Kane-Potaka & Kumar, 2019).

The United Nations approved the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as the Global Goals, in 2015 as a global appeal to ensure that by 2030 everyone would experience peace and prosperity, and that development must balance social, economic, and environmental sustainability (United Nations Development Programme, 2022). SDG 2: Zero Hunger advocates for abolishing hunger and all types of malnutrition, as well as increasing agricultural output and food producer incomes (Li & Siddique, 2018). There are two major concerns in today’s agriculture and food systems: (1) concentration on a few staple crops, which leads to imbalanced meals and malnutrition and (2) traditional agricultural production, which follows a high input-high output paradigm, making farming more sensitive to environmental shocks (Li & Siddique, 2020). The future smart food crops concentrates on

the following groups: (1) cereals, (2) roots and tubers, (3) pulses, (4) fruits and vegetables, and (5) nuts, seeds, and spices (Li & Siddique, 2018). “Future smart food for zero hunger will be crucial from a policy, institutional, and technical standpoint to improve food security and nutrition strategies”, said Dr Patrick Caron, Chair of the High-Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition of the United Nations Committee on World Food Security, in *Future Smart Food Rediscovering Hidden Treasures of Neglected and Underutilized Species for Zero Hunger in Asia* (2018).

Besides, the increased prevalence of lifestyle illnesses is among the elements driving demand for smart food alternatives (Emergen Research, 2022). Prevention is better than cure. Do we often hear this idiom? Truly, God holds us accountable for our physical well-being (al-Khayat, 1997). Abu Hurairah narrated that the Prophet of Allah the Almighty, Muhammad (peace be upon him) said:

Indeed the first of what will be asked about on the Day of Judgment — meaning the slave of Allah being questioned about the favours — is that it will be said to him: “Did We not make your body, health, and give you of cool water to drink? (Jami‘ al-Tirmidhi, Book 47, Hadith 410).

The first policy that has been established by Islam is to bring the origin of something created by Allah the Almighty, whatever the goods or benefits, the origin is halal (permissible/lawful) and can be used, unless there is an authentic and clear text from Shariah that decrees its prohibition. As Allah the Almighty said: “And He has subjected to you whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on the earth — all from Him. Indeed, in that are signs for a people who give thought”, (al-Quran, 45:13) and “O mankind, eat from whatever is on earth [that is] lawful and good and do not follow the footsteps of Satan. Indeed, he is to you a clear enemy”, (al-Quran, 2:168). The initiative of the future smart food is in line with the Islamic teaching to emphasise the nation to eat from whatever is on earth that is lawful (halal) and wholesome (*tayyib*), as long as there is none of the food sources from the impermissible (haram) ones. Abdullah Ibn Abbas narrated a Hadith:

The people of pre-Islamic times used to eat some things and leave others alone, considering them unclean, then Allah sent His Prophet (peace be upon him) and sent down His Book, marking some things lawful and others unlawful; so what He made lawful is lawful, what He made unlawful is unlawful, and what he said nothing about is allowable (Sunan Abi Dawud, Book 28, Hadith 65).

So, the *Tayyib* concept includes the meaning of purification, quality, premium, and producing in good practice.

On a final note, feeding a person, preserving nature (*hifz al-Biah*), and growing a seed are all good and beneficial for the community. In Islam, it is called *Maslahah ‘Ammah*. With the future smart food initiative, SDG 2: Zero Hunger and SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being

shall be realised. Anas Ibn Malik narrated that Allah's Apostle (peace be upon him) said: "There is none amongst the Muslims who plants a tree or sows seeds, and then a bird, or a person, or an animal eats from it, but is regarded as a charitable gift for him", (Sahih al-Bukhari, Book 41, Hadith 1).

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