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Biochemical Compounds and Nutritional Roles of the Foods Explained in the Qur'an

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Abstract: Moslems believe that Islam is the most perfect religion and Qur'an the most perfect book that explains all human needs with the best style and there isn't any defect in Islam and Qur'an. The Holy Qur'an says; let man consider his food. Therefore we have decided to investigate the nutritional roles of those foods stated in Qur'an and their biochemical compounds. Almost all diet that is known as complete food today, mentioned in Qur'an and their advantages explained occasionally. A number of verses justified some differences that there were in divine religions about food consumption and a few explained advantages and disadvantages of certain nutrients and drinks such as wine. However according to our knowledge about nutritional roles of food in Qur'an it could be concluded their importance in health and prevention of disorders. Nevertheless, Islam has stressed on health and ordered to save it as a deposit, so the foods mentioned in Qur'an might have a lot of advantages, for example the best oil that has protective role in atherosclerosis is olive oil that is contain of a lot of $\omega 9$ fatty acids, researchers say today, olive is mentioned several times in Holy Qur'an. It is more possible that many unknown advantages in Olive and other Qur'an's nutrients exist that will be revealed in future. Therefore Moslem scientists have an important duty to reveal a part of these unknowns

Key words: The Qur'an, nutrition, food, biochemical compounds

Introduction

The Qur'an places a particular emphasis on knowledge and different kinds of science such as biology, geology, physics, chemistry, social sciences, etc. and in doing so, it has focused on various verses-whether directly or indirectly. These verses include; Holy Qur'an: Az-zumar-9; Al-mojadalah-11; Saba'-6; Al-hajj-54; Al-alaq-1,5; Albagarah-21,23; Al-jumuah-5; Al-anam-50; Fater-19; Arrad-16; Al-bagarah-261; Al-ahzab-34; Ar-rad-19 (as cited Mohammadi Al-Reyshahri, 1993; Alhakimi et al., 1991). It can be inferred from these verses that every science that leads man towards the aim for which he was created (i.e., elevation, perfection, sincere servitude), can be considered an acceptable science. Thus, although the Qur'an is not a book of empirical science instruction, there are many verses in the Qur'an that motivate and inspire people to study the sciences.

The word "science", which implies knowledge and cognition, is a sacred and confirmable word and it can lead people to perfection. Therefore, we cannot confine this word to a very limited part of the branches of science. Each of these branches can lead people to sublimity and transcendence; the study of the Qur'an can be regarded as a religious science. Possessing a solid

knowledge of science can be a part of religiosity and this is the reason why the religious people should necessarily have knowledge and awareness.

Science that does not lead to religiosity cannot be considered a real and true science and a religious person who does not have any knowledge of science cannot be considered a real and true believer. The Qur'an promotes knowledge and science, which can promote goodness and thus religiosity. Therefore, a book such as the Qur'an, which disseminates science and learning, should itself be scientific. The Qur'an's content includes extensive scientific facts that are consistent with all scientific principles. Therefore, the fact that the Qur'an mentions these scientific principles. however briefly, when it was recorded fourteen centuries ago only serves to solidify believers' faith in the Qur'an. It is very important for people today to know that Islam is a religion based on science, knowledge, cognition and a sound mind; it advocates reason and argument and fights unwise dogmatism and prejudice. Such a view of Islam will increase real knowledge and a true love for this divine religion and thus will be effective in inspiring people to act in accordance with its lofty doctrines and teachings. This article has been written with this goal in

mind. To accomplish this goal, only some of the most important verses that refer to scientific facts have been selected and explained.

According to Golshani (Golshani, 1996) more than ten percent of the verses of the Qur'an refer to the natural phenomena. There are more than 750 verses in the Qur'an that refer to natural phenomena. Most of these verses recommend the study of the nature and creation. From the viewpoint of the Qur'an, natural creations are tokens of the exalted God and should bring us closer to God (Holy Qur'an: Ar-rum-21, 22, 24; Al-hajj-62). There are many verses in the Qur'an that invite people to study nature (Holy Qur'an: Yunus-101; Adh-dhariyat-20, 21; Al-ankabut-20; At-tariq-5).

It can also be inferred from the verses (Holy Qur'an: Al-baqarah-31; Al-alaq-5; Al-nahl-78) that God has trusted people's aptitude for cognition and it is up to them to actualize this aptitude. In addition verses (Holy Qur'an: Fussilat-53; Al-naml-93; Al-anbiya-37) show us that humans are capable of understanding many facts. The ultimate goal of understanding nature, from the viewpoint of the Qur'an, is to increase people's understanding of God and their nearness to Him.

Therefore there are many verses in the Qur'an regarding those things which are very important from physical health point of view. In other words, there are some religious commandments in the Qur'an which involve medicine and health benefits that observing them cause the avoidance of different diseases. These verses about "food health" can be divided into different groups (Rezai Esfahani, 2001):

Invitation to clean foods: "O you who believe! Eat of the good things that We have provided you with and give thanks to Allah [God] if Him it is that you serve" (Holy Qur'an: Al-baqarah-172). "O men! Eat the lawful and good things, out of what is in the earth and do not follow the footsteps of the Shaitan" (Holy Qur'an: Al-baqarah-168).

Prohibition of unsanitary and squalid foods: "Those who follow the Apostle-prophet makes lawful to them the good things and makes unlawful to them impure things" (Holy Qur'an: Al-araf-157).

Prohibition of extravagance in (eating) food: "O children of Adam! Eat and drink and be not extravagant" (Holy Qur'an: Al-araf-31).

Prohibition of eating the meat of what has died of itself: "Say: I do not find in that which has been revealed to me anything forbidden for an eater to eat of expect that it is be what has died of itself (Holy Qur'an: Al-anam-145). This fact is also mentioned in other verses of the Qur'an (Holy Qur'an: Al-nahl-115; Al-baqarah-73; Al-maidah-3).

Prohibition of eating the flesh of swine: "He has only forbidden you flesh of swine" (Holy Qur'an: Al-nahl-115). This fact is also mentioned in other verses (Holy Qur'an: Al-anam-145; Al-bagarah-73; Al-maidah-3).

Prohibition of eating blood: "Forbidden to you is blood". This matter is also mentioned in other verses (Holy Qur'an: Al-nahl-115; Al-bagarah-73).

Prohibition of drinking wine: O you who believe! intoxicants and are only an uncleanness material, the Shaitan's work; shun it therefore that you may be successful. The Shaitan only desires to cause enmity and hatred to spring in your (heart) midst by means of intoxicants and games of chance and to keep you off from the remembrance of Allah and from prayer, will you then desist?" (Holy Qur'an: Al-maidah-90, 91).

Nutrition is essential for survival and health promotion while it is impossible to have good health without good nutrition. Not only nutrition as instrument for preventing of disease, but also in health promotion of both individual and society is very important (Mahan and Escoott-Stump, 2004). Therefore scientist paid attention to foodstuff and their ingredients as well. From this point of view some foodstuffs are more important than others (Garrow et al., 2000; Mirmiran, 1998; Amanda, 2000). Food is taken into consideration in Holy Qur'an as say: let man consider his food (Holy Qur'an: Abasa-24). In this Holy book it has been emphasized on some nutrients and explained advantages of some of them occasionally (Holy Qur'an: Muhammad-15; Al-baqarah-57; Al-anam-99; Al-nahl-67). For example olive, mentioned several times (Holy Qur'an: Al-anam-99; Alnahl-11; At-teen-1), now we know that Olive oil is very important, because of having mono unsaturated fatty acid, which its per oxidation is less than other poly unsaturated fatty acids, hence it's consuming are recommended for preventing of arthrosclerosis disorder (Mahan and Escoott-Stump, 2004; Garrow et al., 2000; Mirmiran, 1998). Moslems believe, Holy Qur'an belongs to all people, past, present and future, therefore there are many important preference points in foodstuff that have been mentioned in Qur'an that their properties have not been yet known. Hence we decided to review the foodstuff mentioned in Holy Qur'an and tabulate micro and macro-nutrients contents of them.

Results

Food guide pyramid and dietary guidelines were planned in 1992. This pyramid had recommendations into a visual form of the kinds and amounts of food to eat each day. Food guide pyramid divided foodstuffs into 5 groups including: cereals, vegetables, fruits, dairy products and meats. There was a voluntary and free groups including of fats and simple carbohydrates in this pyramid (Amanda, 2000). Professor Willet modified

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Table 1: Foodstuff in Quean and ralated Verses

	Cure and Verse											
Food stuff	Sura and Verses											
Pome-	Al-anam	Al-rahman										
granate 	22	68										
Fig	At-teen 1											
Grape	Al-baqarah 266	Al-anam 66	Al-araf 19	Yousaf 36	Ar-rad 4	Al-nahl 67,11	Al-isra 91	Al-kahf 32	Al-muminun 19	Yaseen 34	Al-naba 32	Abasa 28,9
Apple	Al-baqarah 35	Al-araf 35	Al-anam 141			·						
Olive	Al-anam 141,99	At-teen	Al-nahl 11	Al-muminun 20	Al-nur 35	Abasa 29						
Date	Al-baqarah 266	Al-anam 141,99	Ar-rad 4	Al-nahl 67,11	Abasa 29	Al-isra 91	Al-kahf 42	Maryam 25	Al-muminun 19	Ash-shuara 148	Fatir 13	
Date	Saad	Qaf	Al-gamar	Al-rahman	Al-hashr	Al-galam	Al-haqqah	Abasa	Al-masad	Taha	Yaseen	
54.6	44	10	20	68,11	5	22	7	29	5	71	34	
Banana	Al-waqiah-29			30,11			•				- 1	
Onion	Al-baqarah-61											
Garlic	Al-baqarah-61											
Cucumber	Al-bagarah-61											
Squash	As-saffat-146											
Lentil	Al-baqarah-61											
Camphor	Al-insan-5											
Mana of	Al-bagarah	Al-araf	Taha									
hedysarum	57	160	80									
Ginger	Al-insan-17											
Honey	An-naml 69	Muhammad 15										
Poultry	Al-waqiah-21											
Marin food	Al-araf 163	Al-nahl 14	Al-kahf 16,63,61	Fatir 63,12	As-saffat 142	Al-qalam 48	Al-maidah 96	An-nisa 96				
Beef	Al-baqarah 146,144,196 71,70,69,68,67		10,00,01	56,12	112	10		- 55				
Veal	Al-baqarah 93,92,152	Al-araf 148	An-nisa 153	Al-araf 152	Hud 69	Taha 88	Adh- dhariyat-26					
Lamb	Al-anam 146	Taha 18	Al-anbiya 78	Al-baqarah 196								
Carnel	Alyimran 93	Al-anam 144	Al-araf 40,73,77	Hud 64	Al-isra 59	Al-hajj 36	Ash-shara 155`	Al-qamar 27	Al-mursalat 33	At-takvir 4	Al- ghashigah 17	Ash- shams 13 Al- baqarah-196
Animals	Alyimran 14	Al- maidah 1	Al-anam 137,139, 136,142	Yunus 24	Al- nahl 80,66,8,5	Taha 54	Al-hajj 34,28	Al- muminun 21	Al- furghan 49,44	Ash- shara 133		
 Animals	As-sajdah-	Fatir	Yaseen 71	Ghafir 79	Ash- shura-11	Az- zukhruf-12	An- naziat-33	Abasa 32	+3,+4	155		
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Table 2: Macro nutrients content in food selected (per 100 grams of foodstuff)

	Energy	Water	Carbohydrate	Protein	Lipid	Ash	Crude	Edible	Insoluble	Soluble	
Foodstuff	Kcal	(g)	(g)	(g)	(g)	(g)	Fiber (g)	Fiber (g)	Fiber (g)	Fiber (g)	
Squash	20	93.89	4.311	0.906	0.311	0.772	0.6	1.4			
Cucumber	13.02	96	2.911	0.542	0.13	0.38	0.6	0.898	0.8	0.1	
Onion	38	90	8.625	1.163	0.16	0.37	0.59	1.7	1.6	0.1	
Garlic	235.2	32.54	52.96	11.57	0.607	2.357	1.64	1.05	0	0	
Pom egranate	68.8	81.17	17.14	0.948	0.3	0.61	0.2	0.714			
Fig	74	79.2	19.18	0.76	0.3	0.66	1.2	6.4			
Grape	68.2	81.62	16.33	0.802	0	0.399		1			
Date	252.6	21.26	67.37	2.305	0.232	1.474	2.421	7.421	5.937	1.484	
Lentil	116.7	69.7	20.15	9.04	0.374	0.823	4.949	4.949			

Table 3: Minerals content in food selected (per 100 grams of foodstuff)

	Ca	Р	Fe	Zn	Cu	K	Na	F	Mg	Se	Mn	Cr
Foodstuff	(mg)	(mg)	(mg)	(mg)	(mg)	(mg)	(mg)	(µg)	(mg)	(mg)	(mg)	(mg)
Squash	26.67	38.33	0.356	0.394	0.103	192.2	1.111		24.44	0.003	0.212	0.002
Cucumber	14	17.02	0.28	0.23	0.04	148.9	2	0	11.02	0.006	0.061	
Onion	20	33	0.22	0.19	0.06	156.9	3	60	10	0.003	0.138	0.019
Garlic	126.21	290.8	2.278	2.83	0.205	753.5	21.5		48.21	0	0.101	
Pom egranate	3	7.987	0.3	0.12	0.07	259.1	3		3	0.001		
Fig	36	14	0.36	0.14	0.07	232	2	21	16	0.002	0.128	
Grape	21.02	21.02	0.502	0.049	0.088	118.4	9.011		6.007			
Date	41.37	57.05	1	0.347	0.137	656.8	0.863		43.79		0.295	0
Lentil	69.18	8.179	3.328	1.263	0.251	369.2	2.02		35.86	0.01	0.494	0.009

Table 4: Vitamins content in food selected (per 100 g of foodstuff)

	Vitamin	Beta-	Alpha-	Vitamin										
Foodstuff	Α	carotene	tocoferol	E	D	K	С	B1	B2	В3	B6	Н	B12	Folate
Squash	28. 72	28. 83	0.12		0		5.560	0.044	0.041	0.513	0.65		0	20. 11
Cucumber	5. 022	0	0.16			5.022	4.711	0.03	0.02	0.3	0.051		0	13. 91
Onion	0	0	0.31	0.31	0	5.52	6.375	0.042	0.02	0.148	0.116	1.113	0	19.000
Garlic		0	0	0		0.357	31.20	0.332	0.121	0.7	1.223		0	3.10
Pom egranate	0	0	0.55		0		6.097	0.03	0.03	0.3	0.105		0	6.000
Fig	14. 2	14.00	0.89		0	00	2.00	0.06	0.05	0.4	0.114		0	6.000
Grape	5. 018	28.06	0.7			00	7.579	0.049	0.06	0.3	0.11		0	3.833
Date								0.042	0.116	1.316	0.168		0	0.021
Lentil	1. 01	0.995	0.11	1.283	0	246.1	1.456	0.169	0.072	1.061	0.178	13.13	0	180.800

this food guide pyramid based on epidemiological and clinical trials in 2001. This changes include to use of oils as a good resource of energy and grain as a good resource of protein (Mahan and Escoott-Stump, 2004). It seems that these classification be same as classification of foodstuffs in Holy Qur'an. Because foodstuffs classified as Vegetable in Qur'an including; Garlic (Holy

Qur'an: Al-baqarah-61), Squash (Holy Qur'an: As-saffat-146), Onion (Holy Qur'an: Al-baqarah-61) Cucumber (Holy Qur'an: Al-baqarah-61), fruits including; fig (Holy Qur'an: At-teen-1), grape (Holy Qur'an: Al-nahl-11, 67), banana (Holy Qur'an: Al-waqiah-29), date (Holy Qur'an: Al-nahl-67; Al-muminun-19; Ar-rad-4) and pomegranate (Holy Qur'an: Al-anam-99,141, Al-rahman-68). Grains such

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Table 5: Macro nutrients content in food selected (per 100 grams of foodstuff)

	Energy	Water	Carbohydrate	Protein	Lipid	Ash	Crude	Edible	Insoluble	Soluble	
Foodstuff	(Kcal)	(g)	(g)	(g)	(g)	(g)	Fiber (g)	Fiber (g)	Fiber (g)	Fiber (g)	
Honey	313.4	21.55	78.09	0	0	0.201	0	0	0	0	
breast milk	69.51	87.4	6.911	1.028	4.39	0.199	0	0	0	0	
Milk	68.85	86.89	4.467	3.561	4.139	0.82	0	0	0	0	
Skim milk	61.48	88.11	4.672	3.291	3.34	0.721	0	0	0	0	
Yogurt	74.29	84.9	6.674	4.735	2.792	0.718	0	0	0	0	
Cheese	64.1	55.28	4.085	14.19	21.23	5.176	0	0	0	0	
Whey	23.98	93.5	5.123	0.76	0.089	0.61	0	0	0	0	
Oli∨e	113.6	80	6.364	0.909	10.68	2.273	0	2.205	2.114	0.091	
Ginger	203.12	46.18	46.92	3.169	0.72	1.72	2.22	0.175			

Table 6: Minerals content in food selected (per 100 grams of foodstuff)

	Ca	Р	Fe	Zn	Cu	K	Na	F	Mg	Se	Mn	Cr
Foodstuff	(mg)	(mg)	(mg)	(mg)	(mg)	(mg)	(mg)	(µg)	(mg)	(mg)	(mg)	(mg)
Honey	11.02	11.02	0.7			26.04	5.018		-	0		
Breast milk	32.11	13.82	0.028	0.171	0.049	51.2	17.07	16.99	3.252	0.002	0	0.001
Milk	133.60	110.7	0.049	0.299	0.039	204.5	50.00		13.93		0.008	0.013
Skim milk	119.20	93.42	0.049	0.381	0.205	151.6	49.18	30	13.52	0.001	0.002	0.001
Yogurt	160.80	135.9	0.05	0.771	0.009	227.3	61.22		15.71		0.004	
cheese	493.00	338	0.634	2.887	0.032	63.38	1112.00	86.62	17.61	0	0.028	
Whey	102.80	77.62	0.081	0.431	0.003	143.10	4.97		9.756		0.002	
Olive	90.91	90	3.409	0.227	0.25	0	86.36	0	0		0.023	
Ginger	93.84	145.5	8.405	1.196	0.181	1199.30	29.34		62.8		6.68	

Table 7: Vitamins content in food selected (per 100 g of foodstuff)

		Beta	Alpha											
	Vitamin	carotene	tocoferol	Vitamin	Folate									
Foodstuff	A (RE)	(µg)	(mg)	E (mg)	D (μg)	K (µg)	C (mg)	B1 (mg)	B2 (mg)	B3 (mg)	B6 (mg)	H (µg)	B12 (µg)	(µg)
Honey	0	0				0.021	0	0	0.06	0.099				
Breast milk	72.36	4	0.878	0.992	0.122	1.992	5	0.014	0.036	0.177	0.011	1.016	0.045	5.285
Milk	55.33			0.14	0.0150	4	1.291	0.048	0.14	0.28	0.616	2.008	0.065	0.41
Skim milk	37.79		0.06	0.09	1.045	4	0.939	0.038	0.162	0.084	0.042	3.115	0.357	4.918
Yogurt	19.51	2	0.088				0.531	0.05	0.23	0.075	0.056	2.2	0.567	11.8
Cheese	127.8	3	0.63		0	34.5	0	0.155	0.842	0.989	0.423		1.679	31.94
Whey	2.077				0		0.061	0.042	0.14	0	0.042	1.398	0.179	2.033
Olive	45.45	6	0	0			0	0	0	0.043		0	0	0
Ginger	4.16	2.5					1.44	0.126	0.155	3.38	0.079		0	2.812

as Lentil (Holy Qur'an: Al-baqarah - 61), milk as dairy (Holy Qur'an: Muhammad - 15; Alyimran - 93; Al-nahl - 66), meat including of Lamb, Camel (Holy Qur'an: Al-anam - 143), Veal (Holy Qur'an: Hud - 69; Adh - dhariyat - 26), Poultry (Holy Qur'an: Al - waqiah - 21) sea food such as Fish (Holy Qur'an: Al - nahl - 14), Honey (Holy Qur'an: Muhammad - 15; Al - nahl

-69) and Olive (Holy Qur'an: Al-anam - 99; Al - nahl - 11; At - teen - 1) have mentioned repeatedly and some pharmaceutical vegetable such as ginger (Holy Qur'an: An - nisa - 17) and manna of Hedysarum (Holy Qur'an: Al - baqarah - 57; Al - araf-160; Taha-80) are mentioned in Qur'an as well. Foodstuff in Holy Qur'an shown in Table 1. Macro and micro-nutrients content

(per 100 grams foodstuff) in food selected in Holy Qur'an shown in Table 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7.

Discussion

The food guide pyramid has been introduced in order to prevention health maintenance and atherosclerosis, cancer, pulmonary disease, mind and behavior disorder in 1992 (Amanda, 2000). In this pyramid all foodstuff had been divided into 5 main groups; cereals, vegetables, fruits, dairy products, meat and a free group including simple carbohydrates and fat. In 2001 professor Willet made main modification in food quide pyramid, to improve it's failure with emphasizing on reducing of obesity and chronic diseases, which have known most health problem now (Mahan and Escoott-Stump, 2004; Walter, 2005). The aim of this modified guide pyramid was showing the right way of individuals toward consuming healthy food to achieve health and prevention of chronic disorders. Food guide pyramid emphasized in equivalent on foodstuff consuming, exercise and keeping standard weight. To achieve this condition this pyramid recommend no lavish in eating and drinking (Walter, 2005). Holy Qur'an said in around 1380 or 1400 years ago: eat of the fruit there of when it fruited and pay the due there of upon the harvest day and be not prodigal. Lo! Allah loveth not the prodigals (Holy Qur'an: Al-anam-141), O children of Adam! Look to your adornment at every place of worship and eat and drink, but be not prodigal. Lo! Allah loveth not the prodigals (Holy Qur'an: Al-araf-31). Foodstuff pyramid some lipids such as vegetable oil prefer to other lipids (Mahan and Escoott-Stump, 2004; Walter, 2005). Nowadays researchers believe, that Olive oil changes lipid metabolism and it has profitable effect on diabetes mellitus (Mahan and Escoott-Stump, 2004; Walter, 2005; Thomson et al., 2003). Olive has mentioned in Qur'an repeatedly (Holy Qur'an: Al-anam-99; Al-nahl-11; At-teen-1). Garlic, squash, cucumber and onion which have been talked about them in Qur'an, have a lot of fiber. electrolytes, vitamins and phytonutrients phytochemicals, that have protective effect atherosclerosis and cancer (Mahan and Escoott-Stump, 2004; Amanda, 2000). Qur'anian fruits, fig, grape, pomegranate, banana and date, contain essential mineral elements, phytochemicals, several vitamins and high calories as well (Garrow et al., 2000; Mirmiran, 1998; Movahedi and Roosta, 2000). Honey as nutrient which has many therapeutic effects is mentioned in Holy Qur'an as a very important nutrient (Holy Qur'an: Muhammad-15; Al-nahl-69), it is containing of some carbohydrates, vitamins, minerals and a little amount phytochemicals and as we know it has antimicrobial and antiseptic effect (Mahan and Escoott-Stump, 2004). Holy Qur'an has emphasized on some nutrients and introduces some of them as nutrients of paradise (Holy Qur'an: Muhammad-15; Abasa-28, 29) and some

nutrients are honorable in Qur'an (Holy Qur'an: Taha-80; Maryam-25). In this Holy book take an oath to some foodstuffs (Holy Qur'an: At-teen-1) and call auspicious some of them (Holy Qur'an: An-nur-35) and some foodstuffs introduce as god power symbol (Holy Qur'an: Al-nahl-11, 67). Holy Qur'an confirms some differences idea about foodstuffs in religious, for example says; can ye see yourselves, if the punishment of Allah comes upon you, calling upon other than Allah? Do ye then call (for help) to any other than Allah? (Answer that) if ye are truthful (Holy Qur'an: Al-anam-146). About Wine say; In both is great sin and (some) utility for men; but the sin of them is greater than their use fullness (Holy Qur'an: Albagarah-219). Qur'an emphasized that consume ripeness fruits (Holy Qur'an: Al-anam-141) and sav: when they bear fruit and upon its ripening (Holy Qur'an: Al-anam-99).

Anyway in Holy Qur'an keeping of health is necessary as a task and duty for everybody and stress on foodstuff and say; let man consider his food (Holy Qur'an: Abasa-24). Qur'an is a guide book for all people in past, present and future, as Moslems believe, so it could be concluded that there are many other aspect in Qur'an's foodstuff that make an opportunity to search and discuss about them.

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