



Fatwa no. 12869:

Q: We work in controlling and watching all kinds of traders' commodities such as fruits, vegetables, canned foods and drinks, etc. since they are brought out of the steamers until they are received by the traders. Our question is: Is it permissible for us to eat from these commodities like some bananas or oranges or to drink some canned juice bearing in mind that we only do so on the spot and do not take any of these things away with us? However, we do not open any new closed boxes. Rather, we only eat out of the boxes that we find open already either by the customs after inspection or that which were opened during being unloaded from steamers. We do our best to eat only very few things. In other words, we are sure that what we eat or drink does not harm the merchant at all because most of the merchants increase one or more extra boxes lest there should be any damage or loss etc. Your Eminence may ask: "Why do they eat from such things?" My colleagues say: "We work while bananas or oranges are in front of us. Workers of companies and drivers of trucks eat such things while neither ourselves nor the traders can prevent them. Rather, some traders open a new box for the workers to eat from." So your Eminence knows the human soul! A person takes a banana, an orange, or some canned juice or milk, or any other commodity to eat or drink may be because of fearing hunger, because of seeing others eating, or because of the temptation of the sight, etc. Does this have any relation to Allah's saying,

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(... and those employed to collect (the funds)...) and thus we do not bear any sin by doing so? We hope that your Eminence will provide us with your beneficial answer. May Allah protect and guide you to what He likes and is pleased with.

A: It is impermissible for you to eat any of the merchants' commodities unless you have the permission of their owner. This is because it is authentically reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, (The money of a Muslim is not lawful for his brother except by his consent.) May Allah grant us success! May peace and blessings be upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family and Companions!

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