Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)
For Measuring and Managing Food Waste in the Mess
(Version 1.0)

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) For Measuring and Managing Food Waste in the Mess

A. Purpose

To set a clear and uniform method for weighing, recording, selling and accounting for leftover food (food waste) generated in the university mess, so that:

- the quantity of daily food waste is measured accurately,
- the income from sale of waste to the cattle feed vendor is correctly recorded and deposited in the university account every month,
- the data is used to reduce food wastage and control food cost.

B. Scope

This SOP applies to all university messes (boys and girls hostels, staff mess, and any other dining facility run by the university) and covers all waste from cooked food, plate leftovers and kitchen preparation that is suitable for sale as cattle feed.

C. Definitions

- **Food waste:** Any cooked or uncooked food that is not consumed and is discarded or sent out of the mess.
- **Cooked surplus waste:** Cooked food left in serving vessels/counters after the meal is over.
- **Plate waste:** Food left on students' plates after eating.
- **Kitchen (preparation) waste:** Vegetable peels, trimmings, spoiled raw items and similar material from preparation.
- **Vendor:** The approved cattle feed contractor who buys the waste.
- **Meal session:** Breakfast, Lunch, Evening Snacks, Dinner.

D. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Mess Incharge	Overall in-charge of this SOP. Supervises daily weighing, checks and signs registers, prepares monthly statement, collects money from vendor and deposits it in the university account.
Mess Supervisor / Cook-in-charge	Ensures waste is separated and weighed after every meal, enters weights in the Daily Register, keeps the weighing scale in working condition.
Mess Staff (helpers)	Collect waste in containers, bring it for weighing, keep the area clean.
Student Mess Committee Representative	Acts as an independent witness during weighing on a rotation basis and signs the register.
Vendor / his representative	Lifts waste at the fixed time, signs the weight slip, pays the agreed amount.

Accounts Section	Issues receipt for the deposited money and reconciles it with the mess statement.
Chief Warden / Administration	Periodically verifies records, conducts surprise checks, approves vendor and rates.

E. Equipment and Materials Required

(a) Digital platform weighing scale (capacity 100–200 kg, accuracy 50 g), calibrated and with a valid calibration/verification certificate from Legal Metrology (renewed as required).

(b) Waste containers/drums with lids, separate for: (a) cooked surplus, (b) plate waste, (c) kitchen preparation waste.

(c) Daily Food Waste Register.

(d) Vendor Weight Slip Book, in duplicate.

(e) Monthly Waste Sale Statement.

(f) Gloves, aprons, cleaning material and disinfectant.

F. Waste Segregation Rules

Only the following may go in the waste containers meant for sale as cattle feed:

- cooked rice, dal, vegetables, roti and similar items,
- plate leftovers,
- vegetable and fruit peels and trimmings.

The following must **not** be mixed in:

- plastic, paper, tissue, foil, spoons, glass or any non-food item,
- bones, eggshells or non-vegetarian waste (to be disposed separately as per university rules),
- chemicals, detergent water, oil-soaked rags,
- food that is stale, rotten or harmful for animals (e.g., onion/chocolate-based items in large quantity, moldy food).

Staff must check containers for foreign material before weighing.

G. Procedure

a. Daily Measurement (after every meal session)

(a) **Collect:** After each meal ends, staff collect waste in the labelled containers. Plate waste is collected at the dish-return counter.

(b) **Check the scale:** Place the scale on a flat surface and confirm it shows zero.

(c) **Weigh:** Place each container on the scale. Note the gross weight.

(d) **Tare:** Subtract the marked empty weight of the container to get the net weight. (Or use the tare function of the scale.)

(e) **Record:** The Mess Supervisor immediately writes the net weight in the Daily Food Waste Register (Format A) against the meal session, separately for cooked surplus, plate waste and kitchen waste. No weight is to be written later from memory or on loose paper.

(f) **Note the meal count:** Enter the number of students/persons who ate in that session (from the mess attendance/token/biometric count).

(g) **Sign:** The weighing person signs; the Mess Incharge or the student representative countersigns at least once a day (preferably for the largest meal).

(h) **Store:** Weighed waste is kept in covered containers in the designated waste holding area, away from the kitchen and dining area, until the vendor collects it.

b. End-of-Day Total

At the end of the day, the Mess Supervisor totals all sessions in Format A, calculates waste per person (total net waste in grams ÷ number of persons served), and the Mess Incharge signs the daily total.

c. Handing Over to the Vendor

(a) The vendor lifts waste at a fixed time every day (e.g., after dinner or early morning) from the designated waste holding area only.

(b) Before loading, the Mess Supervisor confirms that the quantity matches the day's register entry. If the vendor's vehicle/containers are weighed separately, the university's weight is taken as the record weight.

(c) **Vendor Weight Slip:** A slip is prepared in duplicate showing date, quantity handed over, vendor name and signatures. One copy goes to the vendor and one stays with the mess.

(d) Waste must not be given to any other person or taken out by mess staff for personal use or sale.

d. Monthly Payment and Deposit

(a) On the last working day of the month, the Mess Incharge prepares the Monthly Waste Sale Statement from the Daily Register and Weight Slips: total weight, rate agreed (per kg, or the fixed monthly amount as per contract) and amount payable.

(b) The statement is shown to the vendor and signed by both parties.

(c) The vendor pays the amount, preferably by bank transfer/UPI/cheque directly into the university account. Cash payment, if unavoidable, must be received only against an official receipt and deposited the same or next working day.

(d) The Mess Incharge deposits the amount in the university account within 2 working days of receipt and obtains the bank deposit slip or Accounts Section receipt.

(e) The deposit slip/receipt number and date are written in Format C, and the file copy is sent to the Accounts Section for reconciliation.

(f) Mess staff must not keep, adjust or spend the sale proceeds for any purpose.

H. Records to Be Maintained

Record	Maintained by	Frequency
Daily Food Waste Register	Mess Supervisor	Every meal
Vendor Weight Slip Book	Mess Incharge	Every pickup
Monthly Waste Sale Statement	Mess Incharge	Monthly
Receipts	Mess Incharge / Accounts	Monthly

I. Controls and Verification

(a) **Scale check:** Weekly zero check and test with a known weight; record in the scale check log. If the error is more than 100 g, stop use and get it repaired or recalibrated.

(b) **Surprise checks:** The Chief Warden or a nominated officer shall carry out at least one surprise weighing check per month and record the result.

(c) **Reconciliation:** Monthly total in Format C must match the sum of the Daily Register and the Weight Slips. Any difference above 2% must be explained in writing.

(d) **Vendor review:** The vendor agreement (rate, payment date, pickup timings, penalty for delay) is reviewed every year or every time the contract is renewed. Rates should be benchmarked against local market rates for cattle feed.

(e) **Segregation of duties (recommended):** The person who weighs, the person who prepares the statement, and the person who deposits the money should preferably not be the same individual. Where this is not possible, the Chief Warden must verify the monthly statement and the deposit slip.

(f) **Audit:** Records are open to internal audit and the university's Accounts/Audit wing at any time.

J. Hygiene, Safety and Environment

- Staff handling waste must wear gloves and wash hands afterwards.
- Waste containers are kept covered and cleaned and disinfected daily after the vendor takes the waste.
- Waste must not remain overnight in the kitchen or dining area. If kept in the holding area, it must be covered to avoid flies, rodents and odour.
- Spillage on the floor is cleaned immediately.
- Waste containers are not used for storing or serving food.
- Water drainage from the waste area must not block drains.

K. Using the Data to Reduce Food Waste

Weighing is not only for sale of waste. The Mess Incharge shall use the data to reduce wastage:

(a) **Monthly analysis:** total waste (kg), waste per person (g), highest and lowest waste days, and waste by menu item.

(b) Identify items that are repeatedly left over and discuss with the Mess Committee for change in quantity, recipe or menu.

(c) Adjust cooking quantity according to the actual headcount (attendance/token system).

(d) Display the monthly waste figure on the mess notice board and run awareness campaigns ("Take only what you can eat").

(e) Set a target, for example reducing waste per person by 10% over the next six months, and review progress at the monthly Mess Committee meeting.

L. Non-Compliance

Any deviation, such as missing entries, unrecorded sale of waste, delay in deposit, or tampering with the scale or registers, must be reported to the Chief Warden. Disciplinary action will be taken as per university rules.

M. Review and Amendment

This SOP will be reviewed once a year by the Mess Incharge and approved by the competent authority. Any amendment will be recorded in the revision history below.

Deputy Registrar

Satya Vir Singh

Registrar