



# **Halal** **pages**

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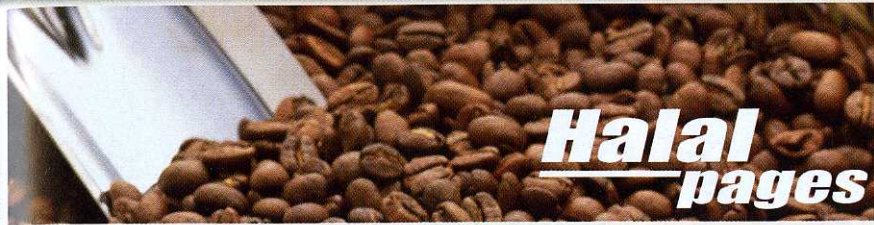
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HALAL INDUSTRY  
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# Halal Meats And Frozen Foods

The Halal Abattoir, Packaging, Storage And Handling



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**H**alal meat, these two words remind me of my experience in England, four years ago. My family and I were just settled down at Surrey - our residence during the years my husband and I were to complete our doctorate. Among the first things we searched were rice and halal meat. Close friends advised us to find them at a Muslim community supermarket. As suggested, we bought our first English halal meat from the recognized halal meat supplier.



In Malaysia we are 'loaded' by many halal meats and halal frozen foods. We take it for granted that we just simply pick any frozen meat or food stamped with the halal logo. Even young children know that if they wanted to buy any packed food, the item must have the familiar Malaysian halal logo.

What is halal? Halal is an Arabic word that refers to a description of things or actions permitted by the Shari'ah law without punishment imposed on the doer. With regard to food and beverage, halal means food and beverage permitted under the Shari'ah law and the items are safe and not harmful as well as (a) do not contain



any parts or products of animals that are non-halal to Muslims or products of animals which are not slaughtered according to the Shari'ah law; (b) do not contain any ingredients that are najis (filth) according to the Shari'ah law; (c) the food or beverage or its ingredients do not contain any human parts or its derivatives that are not permitted by the Shari'ah law. In addition, (d) they are not prepared, processed or manufactured using equipment that is contaminated with things that are najis according to the Shari'ah law; and (e) during its preparation, processing, packaging, storage or transportation, the food is physically separated from any other food that does not meet the requirements stated above, or any other things that have been decreed as najis by the Shari'ah law.

So, to make meat halal, an animal has to be from the halal species and the animal has to be slaughtered in a specified ritual known as Al-Zabeh (slaughter, cutting the throat). It requires the animals to be alive and healthy at the time of slaughter, during which the jugular vein, the carotid artery and the

windpipe are to be severed by a single swipe of a razor sharp knife, to incur as less pain as possible. The name of Allah (tasmiyyah) must be pronounced by the Muslim slaughterer before the cutting action.

**All components of the halal food must be from halal sources that have been handled, packed and stored properly in strict accordance to the Islamic shari'ah. In other words, all stages in which each component is handled, packed and stored, from every component suppliers to the market shelves must be sound, or toyyibah (clean, good & wholesome).**

Recently, we were shocked by news, which exposed some of the abattoirs in the Klang valley that have produced non-halal chickens because those chickens were not slaughtered according to Al-Zabeh. They were stunned to death before slaughtered. However, this case is quite rare. Malaysia, as a halal hub has already defined rules and guidelines in order to assure all meats and frozen food for Muslim consumption are halal and toyyibah before there were sent to the market.

Before a halal certificate is awarded to an abattoir, the abattoir is required to fulfill certain guidelines. These guidelines, prepared and adopted by competent certifying authority are:

1. All slaughterers must be Malaysian citizens with valid JAIN/MAIN (JAIN - Jabatan Agama Islam Negeri or State Islamic Religious Department; MAIN - Majlis Agama Islam Negeri or State Islamic Religious Council) certificates of slaughtering.





2. The number of slaughterers must be at par with the rate of slaughtering activities:-
  - a. one man per 25 cows per hour, and
  - b. one man per 2000 chickens per hour.
3. Obtained veterinary certificate from the Department of Veterinary Services
4. The abattoir must be:
  - a. separated from housing area.
  - b. gated.
  - c. kept immaculately clean at all times
5. The animals to be slaughtered should not be kept at one single space
6. All equipments, storage and transport facilities must be kept immaculately clean at all times and not mixed with

- any non-halal items, swine or un-slaughtered carcass.
7. Stunning the animal is not permitted, except under strict conditions as such:-
    - a. Water stunning for poultry only and electric stunning for cows, buffalos and goats only.
    - b. Stunning must strictly adhere to Al-zabeh specifications and is applicable only for halal animals
    - c. Electric stunning voltage must be controlled and monitored by a specifically trained personnel.

The halal requirements for premises that produce frozen foods are:

1. Use of only halal raw or processed ingredients or additives.
2. The lists of ingredients must comply with those reported in the application form.
3. Must be kept immaculately clean at all times and have schedules for periodical cleaning processes.

4. All equipments are kept in good logistical arrangement, free from any hazard.
5. To not award contracts from foreign partners except those that manufacture ONLY halal products.
6. Premise must be at a distance no closer than 5 km from:
  - a. Any porcine farm
  - b. Any domestic water treatment facility
7. Use of haram (non-halal) materials for packaging is forbidden.
8. Packaging logistics must be in an immaculately clean environment.
9. Labeling on packaging must be clear and permanent, and includes all details of the product.
10. Premise must be gated.

The halal certification is awarded ONLY after each of the requirements above is meticulously fulfilled by the requester. Such are the stringent premises on which the halal foods industries in Malaysia are based upon. What about imported meats or foodstuff?

Malaysia has procedures when dealing with imported frozen meats





products from farm to eventual importation. Lastly, Malaysian religious authorities must conduct original on-site inspections and certifications of the facility with routine follow-up inspections.

and foodstuff. A permit must be obtained from the Malaysian Department of Veterinary Services, in addition to veterinary certificates with each consignment dated within 14 days of importation. It must be signed and endorsed by a competent veterinary officer or authority from the exporting country. It must also ratify approvals and registrations of factories employed by the exporting country as well as methods of sterilization.

**The label “Containing No Pork Products” must be on every 2.2 pounds of the product. Also, there must be a certificate of Islamic Slaughter from a member of an approved Islamic organization recognized by Malaysia. This certificate must accompany the product labeled “halal”, and has been kept separate from non-halal**

Follow-up inspections are also carried out by JAIN officers for Malaysian produced foods or meats. These random inspections help to ensure those abattoirs and frozen food factories are not escaping from the halal certificate requirements. However, defrauding by some misbehaving abattoirs and factories do sometimes occur. In such cases, their halal certificates will be revoked.

A better, reliable, and easier method should be developed to replace the tedious and labour intensive inspections. Such method should enable meats and frozen foods to indicate their halal status in-situ. This scenario requires rigorous scientific research. Calling on these challenges, some local universities, research institutes and ministries are working hands in hands in proposing the “halal laboratory” with focus on developing a specific scientific technique for halal meats and foods detection. It is anticipated that their success should simplify the tedious and complicated follow-up inspection processes currently in practice.

With focused, cohesive hard work and perseverance from many agencies, Malaysia will smoothly ease itself into being a global halal hub. As a Muslim citizen of the country, and of the global Muslim community, this is good news to all of us. God Willing, “MALAYSIA BOLEH”.

