

HALAL

Concept of Halal

The word “Halal” Literally means permissible and in translation, it is usually used as lawful. Opposite to Halal is Haram, which means unlawful or forbidden. With today’s manufacturing and food production, it is hard to know what goes in the food we eat. Food labeling helps, but not everything is listed, and what is listed is often a mystery.

In reference to food, it is dietary standard, as prescribed in the Quran the Muslim scripture. General Quranic guidance dictates that all foods are Halal except those that are specifically mentioned as Haram (unlawful or prohibited). Islam is the natural way of life. Its economical system is just; its social system is based on cooperation and brotherhood; its political system is based on consultation and dietary laws are very simple and beneficial for all the humanity.

The life of the Muslim revolves around the concept of Halal. A Muslim must consume Halal food and drink.

The **concept** of Halal in Islam has very specific motives;

1. To preserve the purity of religion
2. To safeguard the Islamic mentality
3. To preserve Life
4. To safeguard property
5. To safeguard future generations
6. To maintain self-respect and integrity.

What Is Halal?

Halal is an Arabic word meaning lawful or permitted. The opposite of *halal* is *haram*, which means unlawful or prohibited. *Halal* and *haram* are universal terms that apply to all facets of life. However, we will use these terms only in relation to food products, meat products, cosmetics, personal care products, food ingredients and food contact materials.

While many things are clearly *halal* or clearly *haram*, there are some things which are not clear. The questionable or suspect items are referred to as *mashbooh*, which means doubtful or questionable.

ALL FOODS ARE CONSIDERED *HALAL* EXCEPT THE FOLLOWING:

- 1) SWINE/PORK AND ITS BY-PRODUCTS OR ANY DERIVATIVES.
- 2) ANIMALS NOT SLAUGHTERED ACCORDING TO THE ISLAMIC REQUIREMENTS.
- 3) ALCOHOL AND INTOXICANTS.
- 4) CARNIVOROUS ANIMALS, BIRDS OF PREY.
- 5) BLOOD AND BLOOD BY-PRODUCTS.
- 6) FOODS CONTAMINATED WITH ANY OF THE ABOVE PRODUCTS.
- 7) FOOD PRODUCTS AND INGREDIENTS SUCH AS ENZYMES, GELATIN, EMULSIFIER, ARE CONSIDERED *MASHBOOH* AND MUST BE VERIFIED BEFORE ITS APPLICATION.

Guidelines for Halal

Within the Islamic religion, a strong emphasis is placed on cleanliness- both spiritually and in the context of food and drink. For a food and drink product to be approved for consumption it must conform to the Islamic dietary laws as specified in the Quran, the saying of Prophet Muhammad, his Sunnah (tradition) and in Fiqh (understanding) of the Islamic Jurists. The Quran has numerous injunctions instructing Muslims to choose and consume good wholesome foodstuffs.

In the selection of food and drink, Islam has laid down three very important guidelines, namely;

1. Whether the consumption of the foodstuff is prohibited by Allah,
2. Whether the foodstuff is obtained through Halal or Haram means, and
3. Whether or not the material is harmful to health.

As an example, any pig product is considered Haram because the material itself is Haram. Whereas beef from an animal that has not been slaughtered according to Islamic rites would still be considered Haram.

To determine the Halal-Haram status of the foodstuffs and other material, Islam has laid general guidelines on this matter, namely:

1. All raw materials and ingredients used must be Halal.
2. Naturally Halal animals such as cattle, goats etc., must be slaughtered according to Islamic rites, the rituals specify that the act must be performed by a mentally sound Muslim, to sever the blood and respiratory channels of the animal, using a sharp cutting tool such as knife.

3. The Halal ingredients must not be mixed, or come into contact with Haram materials such as products from pig or dog, during storage, transport, cooking serving etc.

Islamic Encouragement for Halal

Islam encourages its followers to choose Halal foods. This awareness is always propagated in Muslim societies and is strengthened by the widespread knowledge extolling the virtues of consuming clean and halal foods.

Due to advancements in food technology and distribution, Muslims are more exposed to various ingredients and manufactured foods imported into Muslim countries.

The most common of these are food additives, gelatin, emulsifiers and rennet in cheese manufacture. The Muslim community would like to know whether or not the addition, the ingredients or the finished foods contain any Haram substance. These products can become Halal if the raw materials are Halal and the process is compatible with the Islamic way.

It's understood that the production of Halal food is not only beneficial to Muslims, but also to food producers, by means of increasing market acceptance of their products.

Pharmaceuticals & Cosmetics

Since these days ethanol, alcohol and animal derivatives a majority of pharmaceuticals and toiletries are made from or have some constituents, which can not be described as Halal.

With the global market for Halal commodities currently valued at \$ 2 trillion alone, the slice of that market commanded by Halal personal care products in the Middle East is currently estimated to be valued at \$560m.

Currently the market for beauty and grooming products as a whole in the Middle East is growing at 12% per annum, and is valued at \$2.1bn – growth that is being mirrored by the demand for Halal personal care products. Halal cosmetics can contain animal-derived ingredients, but these have to be prepared according to Islamic codes dictating procedures for slaughtering and preparing animals.

Although the trend for Halal cosmetic products spells opportunity for producers worldwide.

There are several factors that determine the Halal/Haram status of particular Pharmaceuticals & Cosmetics. Amongst others, it is dependent on its nature, how it was made.