

# Brief Guidance for Halal Meat & Poultry Slaughter

## Definition of Halal

The word 'halal' literally means permissible - and in translation it is usually used as lawful.

The Halal Food Authority rules for slaughtering birds or other permissible animals for halal purposes are based on Islamic Shari'ah laws, EU hygiene and Food Safety and Food Hygiene Regulations.

## Origins of Halal

Muslims are commanded by Allah (SWT) in the Qur'an to eat only pure, wholesome and permissible food that is fit for human consumption. The Qur'an says:

- i. "O, ye men! Eat of what is in the earth lawful and wholesome and follow not the footsteps of Satan; for verily he is an open enemy to you." Al-Baqara 2:168
- ii. "O, ye who believe! Eat of good things. We have provided with and render thanks to Allah. If Him it is ye worship." Al-Baqara 2:172
- iii. "And eat of what Allah hath given you (for food) that which is lawful and wholesome, and fear Allah in whom ye believe." Al-Maida 5:88
- iv. "So eat of that (meat) upon which Allah's name has been mentioned, if you are believers in His verses" Al-Anam 6:118
- v. "And do not eat that upon which the name of Allah has not been mentioned, for indeed it is a grave disobedience". Al-Anam 6:121
- vi. "O Messengers, eat from the pure foods and work righteousness"  
Al-Mu'minun 23:51

Even the food which could come to hand from captives of war, according to Qur'an has to be:

- i. "Eat then of what ye acquired in war, of things (which be) lawful and good and fear Allah, verily Allah is Oft-Forgiving, the Most merciful." Al-Anfal 8:69

The Ahadith of Prophet Muhammed (PBUH) also give us a lot of information on this regard:

- i. Abu Baker RA narrated that Allah's Messenger PBUH said "That body will not enter Paradise which has been nourished with Haram" (Baihaqi)

ii. Ka'b Ibn Ujrah relates that the Prophet of Allah (PBUH) said, "A body nourished with Haram will not enter Jannah". (Tirmidhi)

iii. Jabir RA reported, Allah's Messenger PBUH said, "That flesh will not enter Paradise which has grown from Haram, and all that flesh which has grown from Haram, the fire (of hell) is more worthy of it." (Ahmed, Darimi, Baihaqi)

iv. Abu Hurayrah (RA) reports that the Prophet of Allah (PBUH) said, "a time will come upon the people wherein a man will not bother what he intakes; whether from Halal source or Haram." (Bukhari)

## Law in support of Halal

The Welfare of Animals Slaughtering and Killing Regulations 1999-400 (WASK 99-400) is the law in UK that has to be followed for everyday halal slaughter and, for Udhia/Qurbani slaughtering that takes place once a year at the time of Hajj, the pilgrimage to Mecca, when Muslims have to sacrifice an animal as part of the annual ritual. The law in the United Kingdom directs that for halal slaughtering:

- An MHS (Meat Hygiene Services) licensed Muslim slaughterer would slaughter (in a)
- EU approved and licensed slaughterhouse and
- in the presence or supervision of an Official Veterinary Surgeon

For slaughterhouses within the EU and outside EU the requirements are that:

- A licensed and trained Muslim slaughterman must be present at the slaughtering station performing halal slaughter with the rendition of *Tasmiyah* (Bismillah-i-Allahu-Akbar) on each individual bird/animal.
- Halal slaughtering must be done in the presence of qualified meat inspector/s and/or approved veterinarian/s.
- Slaughterhouse/s must be approved/accredited for quality control systems e.g. ISO/GMP/HACCP/BRC e.t.c.

Ethics and ethos of animal welfare are always being complied with and more importantly, a discipline and decorum is being established for meat hygiene and environmental health laws.

## Basic Requirements

To make meat halal or permissible, meat & poultry has to be slaughtered in a ritual way known as *Zibah*.

The Qur'an gives the following injunctions in chapter al-Maida 5:3 that

- ✓ An animal/bird should not be dead prior to slaughtering. *Zibah* requires animal(s)/bird(s) to be **alive and healthy at the time of slaughter, and not be suffering with any ailments or any lacerations**
- ✓ Forbidden is an animal that has been killed by strangling or by a violent blow, or by a headlong fall
- ✓ A Muslim should perform the slaughtering and recite *Tasmiyah* or *Shahadah*, which fulfils the requirement of dedication. Even in every day life a Muslim is commanded to commence all his deeds in the name of Allah
- ✓ Carrion is forbidden and, jugular veins, carotid arteries and windpipes have to be severed by a razor sharp knife, at least four times the size of the neck by a single swipe, to incur as less a pain as possible
- ✓ All the *flowing blood* (Al- An'am 6:145) must be drained out of the carcass, as blood is forbidden for Muslim consumption
- ✓ Choice of modern scientific technological methods in vogue have to be considered with caution and these should be mirroring the Islamic ethos for them to be acceptable

### Additional requirements

- Since pork is forbidden, halal slaughtering must not be done where pigs are slaughtered or in the vicinity of pigs slaughtering area. Pork should be considered as an allergen for Muslims.
- As far as possible the slaughterer and the bird should face *Qibla* or Mecca.

### Stunning

Halal Food Authority mandates that no stunning is allowed to kill the animal prior to slaughter. However, since Islam is a religion of science, for the numbers and volume which the viable commercial enterprise requires, some kind of immobilisation of birds on the slaughtering line is permitted, to avoid injury to all concerned and bruising of the carcass. Bruised and bloodshot parts are neither to be sold, nor are they allowed in any way in achieving increased financial yields.

There are two known methods of rendering partially or completely immobilising the animals:

1. Gas system for asphyxiation

*Gas smothers the bird and there is no known revival method, so this is not permitted*

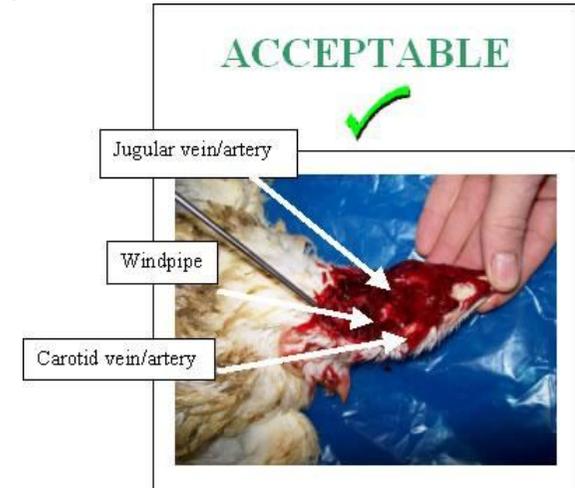
2. Electric-water bath stunning

*With this method, because of the lowest amperage, the birds are calmed down and do not succumb to death prior to slaughtering. Upon slaughtering by a licensed Muslim slaughterman all the flowing blood is drained out in compliance of halal standards.*

### Slaughtering of Poultry

When slaughtering birds/poultry for halal purposes it should be mandatory that the birds are slaughtered from the throat and not the neck and only severing the jugular veins, carotid arteries and windpipes by a razor sharp knife, at least four times the size of the neck by a single swipe, to incur as less a pain as possible. It is imperative to note that:

- 'DORSAL' cut is not permitted
- All *flowing blood* should be drained out of the carcass and
- At the time of slaughtering A Muslim should do the rendition of *Shahadah on every individual bird/animal*
- Blessed blades or recorded Tasmiyah/Shahadah is **not** permitted
- Shahadah **cannot** be only recited at the beginning of the slaughtering; it has to be recited every time an animal/bird is slaughtered/under the blade.



### HACCP – Hygiene

Established HACCP systems must be in place at the premises. No carcass should come from the abattoir without having been passed by an OVS - as being deemed to be fit for human consumption. It has to be ensured that the carcasses are not mixed with non-Halal carcasses, whilst on site or in transit to customers. Strict traceability measures are necessary.

Reference	Version No.	Date	Issued by	authorised by
Halal Handbook	1	03/01/2008	Mr. Khalid Ahmed	Mr. Masood Khawaja