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CRITERIA OF HALAL SLAUGHTER ADOPTED BY HMC

HMC has adopted such a criterion for Halal slaughter that is accepted by all, irrespective of sects and schools of thought. In other words, the most stringent guidelines have been adopted to ensure for universal acceptability and so that the consumable is Halal according to everyone and not just one group.

Therefore the ideal solution is that such a path be adopted that caters for all, not just the majority or any particular group or school of thought. While this may seem difficult it is neither impractical nor unattainable. Both theoretically and practically a "middle-way" must be adopted by the Monitoring group.

In theory the method to adopt that would be all inclusive would be to accommodate only those decisions that are permissible for all, not just those that create lee-ways for a specific group. This is easier than it sounds. The reason is that there are no situations where a certain item would be necessary on one and forbidden on another, but rather an item may be permissible for one group and impermissible for another. In which case the solution is to accommodate the view of impermissibility, as because neither the former are committing any wrong by being made to follow this more precautionary ruling, nor are the latter (for whom the item was impermissible) being subject to rules that do not accommodate them.

Hence, the most important factors of the criteria are:

- **NON STUNNING**
- **MANUAL SLAUGHTER BY A MUSLIM - NON MECHANICAL**
- **VERBAL RECITATION OF ALLAH'S NAME – NO BLESSED BLADES OR PRE RECORDED BISMILLAH**
- **ENSURING THE MINIMUM AMOUNT OF VESSELS ARE SEVERED**

Another reason for HMC adopting the most stringent guidelines is that the Jurists have derived a principal from the shari`ah that الأصل في الأشياء الإباحة وفي اللحوم الحرمة Everything is permissible and Halal except those items which are clearly proven to be prohibited and Haram. On the contrary, all meat of animals is HARAM unless clearly proven to be Halal. We find from this that we need to be extra cautious in certifying as well as purchasing anything from anywhere.

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CONTROVERSIAL		ACCEPTED BY ALL	
Mechanical Slaughter	X	Manual Slaughter by Muslim	✓
Stunning	X	No Stunning	✓
Recorded or Engraved Bismillah	X	Verbal Bismillah on Each Animal	✓
Required Vessels Not Cut	X	Required Vessels Cut	✓



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NECESSITY TO FORM A MONITORING COMMITTEE

Muslims in the UK for many years have been expressing deep concerns as to the authenticity of Halal meat and poultry supplies due to the excessive deception and false labelling of Halal in the industry. **The entire meat industry of the UK is facing a major problem regarding the issue of falsely labelled Halal meat.**

By means of investigation it has been found that there are many causes, which have contributed to this dire situation that faces the Muslims regarding their food, each will be confronted in its place.

Problems start locally, as abattoirs continue to use mechanical slaughter methods and fatal stunning techniques unabated. The pitiful saga continues as slaughterers continue their flagrant disregard of Islamic prerequisites. The problem does not end there, as processors have also added fuel to the fire. The issuing of a 15 year jail term to a very well known processor in UK for the continuous utilisation of foods unfit for human consumption, only touched the tip of the iceberg as there are many more equally if not even more disgusting practices of some in the industry (which include the utilization of Haram animal meat, including pork, and also dirty, rotten, inedible parts of animals that do not even get classified as meat in their mixes), who can only see the acquisition of a quick buck instead of any codes of morality, Islamic or otherwise.

The broadcasting of the Panorama programme 'The Chicken Run' in May 2003, tore open a vicious secret of foreign meats, marked Halal. It disclosed that chicken products being processed were injected with or soaked in water containing enzymes from beef and/or pork. These products were then shipped to the UK marked Halal for the consumption of the unsuspecting Muslim public.

The word 'Halal' has become the most abused word equally misused by Muslims and non Muslims. It is displayed anywhere and everywhere without any kind of regulation and corroboration and the consumers are led to believe that it is genuinely Halal. According to a research, statistics show that over 90% of Halal labelled meat and poultry in the UK is in actual fact, doubtful. Indeed the word 'Halal' displayed at the outlets or on consumables is not sufficient anymore.

In order to overcome this unfortunate situation, a uniform verification and certification body was much needed to oversee, recommend, facilitate, implement the Shari'ah requirements of Halal, and create a clear-cut reliable certification procedure. As such a steering committee was put in place to take us forward into the pursuit of our Islamic duty of facilitating our moral and obligatory right.

The call for a body of Muslim leaders, scholars, and jurists who would form the backbone of such an organisation has been answered in the form of the Halal Monitoring Committee in order to serve the Muslim Ummah. The Halal Monitoring Committee does not side with any one particular sect, but rather is a universal service, which seeks to represent all the different schools of thought within Islam and also to obtain self sufficiency (i.e. not remain dependant on donations for its continuation).

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Further Reading

- ➡ Problems discovered in the 'Halal' industry
- ➡ Fatwa on the importance of investigating - Can we trust the word 'Halal'?



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PROBLEMS DISCOVERED IN THE 'HALAL' INDUSTRY

HMC exposes the corrupt practices found in the 'Halal' meat industry highlighting the potential dangers for Muslim consumers who freely buy meat and poultry from non certified sources and which necessitated the formation of HMC. What is even more worrying is that despite many slaughter - conditions being violated, the consumables are falsely labelled as 'Halal' and consumers are led to believe that they are genuinely Halal whereas in many cases the consumables would be Haram!

We can divide the industry into four areas:

1. Abattoirs & Slaughterhouses
2. Processing Plants
3. Outlets (Butchers, Restaurants, Takeaways etc)
4. Other Certifications

Abattoirs & Slaughterhouses

Many Muslims who originate from the Indian sub continent, Africa or Arab countries naively think that all meat and poultry is slaughtered in a simple manner which they saw practised in the countries they came from. What we have failed to realise is the demand for Halal meat and poultry has dramatically increased in the west and the companies supplying the meat and poultry have had to look for ways to increase the output. This has meant finding quicker ways of slaying the animals and at the same time keeping within the Halal laws. With this proving difficult, many slaughterhouses have looked for shortcuts in the Halal rules, many disregard the Halal slaughter prerequisites and many have no knowledge of the prerequisites whilst the main aim has become the increase of production and its returns. The corrupt and non-islamic practices prevalent within slaughterhouses supplying to the Halal market are as follows:

Place your cursor on the items below to read more on the issue

- 🖱 Slaughtermen at abattoirs not reciting the Tasmiyah which is a condition for the animal to be Halal
- 🖱 Taped Tasmiyyah
- 🖱 Blessed Blades
- 🖱 Non-Muslims slaughtering at various abattoirs, rendering the meat Haram
- 🖱 Mechanical slaughter/usage of rotating mechanic blades which does not serve to conduct a Halal slaughter



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- ❏ Minimum amount of required vessels not cut resulting in the animal being Haram
- ❏ Stunning animals prior to slaughter
- ❏ Dip tank water temperature over 60C for de-feathering causing the impurity to reach the flesh, which is Haram
- ❏ Imports and Mixing
- ❏ Contamination issue



Processing Plants

A large amount of meat and poultry slaughtered in the abattoirs is then passed on to the processing plants. The processing plants can range from processing, cutting, de-boning to preparing ready made meals and preparing frozen packed or canned consumables. In our experience many of the processing plants are not very particular in verifying the methods of slaughter and are accommodating any meat or poultry which is labelled Halal whether from the U.K or abroad. This is leading to problems similar to those at the abattoirs where verification of the halalness of the products is very difficult. In fact, although sometimes the processing plants may be unaware of the source, some are deliberately sourcing from Haram. The other issue is anonymous meat and poultry imported from around the world labelled Halal is entering the market without the importers even knowing what slaughter methods are being used. Many of these when scrutinized and checked do not even come close to being Halal.

Outlets (Butchers, Restaurants, Takeaways etc)

The butchers and outlets receiving the meat and poultry from the abattoirs and processing plants are just as negligent in verifying their sourcing as the rest of the chain above. Many of them are genuinely unaware of the problematic industry and they would merely place the trust in and take the word of the supplier just because it is claimed to be Halal.

Other Certifications and their Flaws

The only way to help Muslim consumers make an informed choice and help them consume genuine Halal meat and poultry was to introduce a certification system which covers all the chain from source to outlet. There have been quite a few attempts in the past and currently to certify this problematic industry. The sad thing is that some of the systems put in place by a number of certifying bodies are very weak and have only increased the problem. Some organisations issue Halal certificates for life, others issue Halal certificates over the phone, other abattoirs are inspected once a year and issued a Halal certificate, and other certifiers do not even have knowledge of what are the correct standards for Halal. Sadly, stunned and mechanically slaughtered meat and poultry is also being certified by various bodies in the UK.

THE MOST ABUSED WORD 'HALAL'!

The above problems highlighted lead to the biggest dilemma of all, Muslim consumers buying meat, poultry, kebabs, samosas or anything else labelled as Halal from butchers, takeaways, or restaurants are not and can not be certain about the genuineness and authenticity of the Halal label, either through ignorance in the chain of suppliers or either through unscrupulous, deceitful, corrupt and greedy meat traders.

In conclusion, the word Halal has become the most abused word equally misused by Muslims and non Muslims. The word 'Halal' is displayed anywhere and everywhere without any kind of regulation and corroboration and the consumers are made to believe that it is genuinely Halal.

The questions we leave you with are:

- How confident are you about the Halal status of the meat and poultry you are consuming today?

- How sure are you that the meat and poultry you are buying today is not slaughtered in the above mentioned methods?
- Is the word Halal displayed sufficient for you, or do you require some kind of assurance?
- Make an informed choice! Refuse to be conned in Haram in the name of Halal.

Let's clean up the Halal industry!

This state of affairs urgently dictated that a committee be setup which monitored every phase of the processing of meat and poultry to ensure their suitability for the Muslim market. Enter HMC



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