

A REVIEW OF HALAL FOOD WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO MEAT AND ITS TRADE POTENTIAL

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ABSTRACT

Nature has blessed human being with plenty of resources to meet their needs. He has been given options to utilize those resources rightly or wrongly. Food is one of the biggest needs of human life and its selection and processing varies between different regions, religions and cultures. Religion is the most powerful factor influencing the dietary patterns and habits. This study attempts to review the meaning and methods pertaining to Halal food through reference found in different Qur'anic verses, Ahadith and sayings of Imams and Muftis of different opinions. The word Halal has been discussed from different aspects. Verses from different Surahs, like Al-Baqarah have been referred to. The Qur'an commands to take Halal food, before the performance of good deeds as it provides energy to both body and soul. Liquid and solid food items, such as water, vegetables and fruits have been described halal. All these items are originally lawful, unless contaminated with impurity. The halal meat from cattle has been mentioned with interpretation of the cattle. The meat has been chosen especially without vegetables, fruits, and other food items, because the Muslims and Jews are more cautious about meat and slaughtering procedures. Types of animals have been categorized as some are Land Animals like camel, cow, buffalo and rabbit. Some of the birds are discussed like chickens, ducks, sparrows, ostriches, pigeons and quail and all of them are Halal. Some are doubtful birds like the crow and parrot are described. Out of marine animals some are halal such as fish and some are doubtful like prawn, starfish, crabs, oysters, dogfish and shark as decreed by certain Imams. Slaughtering has been mentioned as an essential requirement of Halal meat from land animals. The slaughtering process should be according to Islamic principles; cutting of blood vessels properly and mentioning Allah Almighty's name while slaughtering. Halal food generates great demand in the world particularly in the Muslim countries. Currently, international market of halal food runs into US\$580 billion annually. Pakistan needs to exploit this opportunity to develop livestock sector and earn foreign exchange.

Keywords: Halal food, meat, trade, livestock.

INTRODUCTION

Food is the essential requirement for human life. Human population has spread over the earth and its nutrient needs have been provided by nature through plants and animal resources distributed over the globe. Food habits vary among regions, religions and tribes. Food is one of the biggest needs of human life and its selection and processing varies between different regions, religions and cultures. Religion is the most powerful factor influencing the dietary patterns/habits. Muslims and Jews are very much careful in foods and their only choice is halal food.

Definition of halal: Halal (Arabic: حلال ḥalāl, "lawful") is a term designating any object or an action which is permissible to use or engage in, according to Qur'an and Sunnah (Al-Hanafī, 2006). The term is used to designate food seen as permissible according to Islamic law. Halal meat can be got from those halal animals that have been slaughtered in the prescribed way according to the Islamic Jurisprudence (Shariah).

God reminds the believers time and again in the

Holy Scripture to eat what is "Halalan Tayyiban," meaning "permitted and good or wholesome" (Regenstein et al., 2003). Allah says "O, Mankind! Eat of that which is Lawful and Wholesome in the earth" (Quran II: 168). "Eat of the good things. We have provided for your sustenance, but commit no excess therein." (Quran XX: 81). Again in Sura 6 of the Quran, entitled "Cattle," Muslims are instructed to eat the meat of animals upon which Allah's name has been invoked. This is generally interpreted as meaning that an invocation has to be made at the time of slaughtering an animal. "Eat of that over which the name of Allah hath been mentioned, if ye are believers in His revelations" (Quran VI: 119).

While Muslims eat what is permitted specifically or by implication, albeit without comment, they avoid eating what is specifically disallowed, such as: "And eat not of that whereupon Allah's name hath not been mentioned, for lo, it is abomination. Lo! The devils do inspire their minions to dispute with you. But if ye obey them, ye will be in truth idolators" (Quran VI: 121). The majority of Islamic scholars are of the opinion that this verse deals with proper slaughtering of the allowed

animals. Since Muslim dietary laws relate to Divine permissions and prohibitions, if anyone observes these laws, he or she is rewarded in the hereafter, but if anyone violates these laws, he or she may receive punishment accordingly.

The rules for those foods that are not specifically prohibited may be interpreted differently by various scholars. The things that are specifically prohibited are just a few in number, and are summarized in the following verses: "Forbidden unto you are: carrion and blood and swine flesh, and that which hath been dedicated unto any other than Allah, and the strangled, and the dead through beating, and the dead through falling from a height, and that which hath been killed by the goring of horns, and the devoured of wild beasts save that which ye make lawful, and that which hath been immolated to idols. And that ye swear by the divining arrows. This is abomination" (Quran V:3).

Halal meat: Some of the foods are liquid and some solid. The liquid food items comprises from water, juices, milk etc. And the sources of solid food are minerals, plants and animals. As we are concerned with meat, so our focus will remain on Halal Animals. Meat is an essential component of human diet. Its consumption pattern is greatly affected by the religion, regions, age groups and purchasing powers of the consumers. Religion is a powerful factor in determining the meat consumption and it allows or prevents the use of certain types of meat by a group of people. The Muslim and Jews communities are more sensitive to selection of meat types and it happens mostly during their international tours as well as during their stay in hometowns or abroad. The meat fit for consumption by these communities is called as Halal and Kosher, respectively and are governed by special laws as reviewed previously (Regenstein et al., 2003).

As followers of an older religion, the Jews a question arise why they follow the kosher dietary laws? Grunfeld (1972) reported that the Jews have accepted the laws as they were given by God and there was no need for explanation. However, during the modern times some people have tried to justify the laws under scientific arguments. We can not consider the kosher laws as health laws. The Kosher laws are Biblical in origin, are have been received through the original five books of the Holy Scriptures named as the Torah. On the other hand, health laws are derived from scientific experimentation and research findings regarding meat quality and its interaction with human health and diseases, conducted over many decades.

The consumption of meat by man has been criticized by vegetarians. Muslim scholars have forwarded arguments in favor of meat consumption (Zakir Naik, 2007). The availability of incisor teeth, meat digesting enzymes in the human digestive tract, availability of essential 8 amino acids in meat favor meat

consumption by man. Slaughtering of food animals by Muslims has been criticized by non-Muslims. Islamic Shariah has dictated for welfare of animals and their treatment in a very kind manner. It has been advised to use sharp knife while slaughtering an animal and it has been proved to be painless. Three tubes have to be cut during slaughter among the esophagus, trachea, jugular veins/arteries. It lets the blood flow out of the body enhancing the quality of meat. Loss of blood during slaughter decreases the flow of blood towards brain and the sensation of pain ceases. Blood is an excellent media for growth of micro-organisms. So removal of blood from the body tissues minimizes the risk of growth of microorganisms. The spinal cord is not cut during slaughter which is required for heart beat and that is required during slaughter for expulsion of blood from animal's body.

Types of meat animals: Halal animals are classified into various types, on the basis of their habitats, as some are Land Animals and the others are Marine Animals. Land Animals can survive on land only. Some of them may be domestic, as they live in homes, dairy farms and poultry farms, camel farms etc, for example cattle, hen and camel. All of these animals are Halal after proper slaughtering. The second type of land animals is wild animals. They are called wild because they are not domesticated by human beings. Some of Halal wild animals are deer, ostrich, rabbit, and various birds. On the other hand, as compared to land Animals, there are marine animals. They can survive in water only, and their lives end while getting out from water. Fish is one of the most familiar Marine Animal and it is Halal even if not slaughtered. The types of Halal animals have been reviewed (Al-Fouzan, 1988). As far as sea-foods are concerned, so there are different opinions, by Muslim imams, concerning permissibility of marine animals. So according to Malakiyyah group, all sea-foods are halal. According to Hambaliyyah, all marine animals are halal except frog, crocodile and snake. And according to Hanafiyyah, only fish is halal.

Halal meat trade: Halal food is required in the Muslim communities in Muslim countries as well as non-Muslims. Availability of food in the markets provides a wide variety to choose, but the lack of information about Halal food makes it difficult to go for the selection of the right product. Different companies claim to provide halal food, but it is difficult to test the validity of this claim. Muslim countries have abundant of food resources but very few have realized the importance of Halal food trade. In 2008, the total food consumption of the more than 1.6 billion Muslims spread across 148 countries was valued at US\$520 billion while international Halal food trade was valued at US\$150 billion (Rahman-F, 2010). Ehow (2012) has stated that international halal food market is US\$580 billion per annum.

Both kosher and halal are important components of the food business (Regenstein et al, 2003). Most people, even in the food industry, are not aware of the breadth of foods that are under religious supervision. Economic aspects are important for the food industry to have a better understanding of kosher and halal. The kosher market according to Integrated Marketing, an advertising agency specializing in the kosher food industry comprises almost 75000 products in the United States. In 2001, about 165 billion dollars worth of products were estimated to have a kosher marking. The deliberate consumers of kosher food; that is, those who specifically look for the kosher mark, are estimated to be more than 10 million Americans and they are purchasing almost 7 billion dollars worth of kosher products.

Annually, almost 10,000 companies produce kosher products and the average U.S. supermarket has 13,000 kosher products. Fewer than 1/3, and possibly as low as 20%, of kosher consumers are Jewish (900,000 year-round consumers). Other consumers who at times find kosher products helpful in meeting their dietary needs include Muslims, Seventh Day Adventists, vegetarians, vegans, people with various types of allergies—particularly to dairy, grains, and legumes—and general consumers who value the quality of kosher products, even though there is rarely a one-to-one correlation between kosher and these consumers' needs. Hebrew National's slogan, "We report to a higher authority" and "You don't have to be Jewish to love Levy's Rye Bread," are two of the more famous campaigns used to advertise kosher products to non kosher consumers. AdWeek magazine in the early 1990s called kosher "the Good Housekeeping Seal for the '90s." By undertaking kosher certification, companies can incrementally expand their market by opening up new markets.

The Muslim population in the U.S. is developing a stronger marketplace presence each year. Over the past 30 years, many halal markets and ethnic stores have sprung up, mainly in the major metropolitan areas. Most of the 6 to 8 million Muslims in North America observe halal laws, particularly the avoidance of pork, but the food industry has for the most part ignored this consumer group. Although there are excellent opportunities to be realized in the North American halal market, even more compelling opportunities exist on a worldwide basis as the food industry moves to a more global business model.

Thai meat exports: Thailand relies heavily on exports, which make up more than 60 per cent of its gross domestic product (GDP). Its domestic market is not that large and thus the country strives to penetrate untapped markets and diversify into new areas. The halal trade fits perfectly in this scheme of things. According to a document produced by Dr Winai Dahlan of the Halal Science Centre, Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok,

its share in the global halal food market is just one per cent. Hence, Thailand is targeting Muslims across the world, particularly those living in Western economies – where those who have migrated tend to enjoy a higher amount of disposable income than in their home countries. The third author of this paper has got an opportunity to visit Thailand in connection with attending the International Training Course on Swamp Buffalo Reproduction at Chulalongkor University, Bangkok. During the visit two decades back Thais were found engaged in meat export to the Middle East. Being Buddhist, they were the biggest exporter to that region for which they got involved Muslim Pathan butchers and dairy farmers, migrated from Peshawar and the surrounding since many decades. The author was pleased to know about establishment of the Halal Science Center at the same University. This shows consistent hard work of Thais to support their economy through Halal food exports.

The Malaysian case: Shafie and Osman (2006a) have reviewed the Malaysian Halal Food Industry. They have mentioned that processed food is halal if it is not made up of or does not contain parts or by-products of animals which Muslims are forbidden to consume. It should not contain what the law terms as filth, and should be prepared, processed and manufactured using untainted equipment. In preparation, processing and storage, halal food should not come into contact with or be in close proximity to that which is not halal. The premises for manufacturing, preparing and selling food and drinks must be clean and free of elements which may cause infestation or flies, rats, cockroaches, lizards and other such pests. Factory workers must be healthy, and wear clean, protective clothing to avoid contamination. Equipment used must be washed frequently to ensure cleanliness.

In the quest to increase value added, efforts are being made to promote Malaysia as a regional distribution and warehousing hub (Shamsudin and Selamat, 2006). Efficient facilitation measures are being undertaken to accelerate this regional hub. This will enable the processing and trading of goods for a much wider markets, thus accruing the benefits from economies of scale. Steps are also being taken to position the country as an international center for halal food to cater for the global market. Towards this end, measures are undertaken to leverage on the country's credibility in producing halal food.

Having reviewed the lawful marketing of food, Shafi and Osman (2006b) reported that Muslims in Malaysia are looking for authenticity of Halal meat through certification, which shall be issued by the Department of Malaysia Islamic Development (JAKIM) that fall under the jurisdiction of the Ministry in the Ministry of the Prime Minister. This certificate authorizes

the companies to use the Halal slogan and to print on packaging of their products or to display in the hypothesis of the company. Consumers have become more religious or halal-conscious, and will be looking for products that do not only meet their biological nutrient needs, but also give them peace of mind. The halal introduction logo by the JAKIM brought more awareness among the Muslims of the importance of consuming products or engages in services that follow the guidelines and principles of Islam.

In the quest to increase value added, efforts are made to promote Malaysia as a regional distribution and warehousing hub (Shamsudin and Selamat, 2006). This will enable the processing and trading of goods for a much wider market, thus accruing the benefits from economies of scale. Efficient facilitation measures will be undertaken to accelerate the development of a regional distribution and warehousing hub. Steps will also be taken to position the nation as an international centre for halal food to cater for the global Muslim market. Towards this end, measures will be undertaken to leverage on the nation's credibility in producing halal food. In addition, R&D on food technology will be intensified.

Potential role of Pakistan: Pakistan has got a huge animal resource base. The population of cattle, buffaloes, sheep and goat is 35.6, 31.7, 28.1 and 61.5 million respectively. Pakistan has been ranked 2nd in buffalo milk production and 3rd in global milk production. Although the livestock sector contributes 55% to the agricultural value addition and 11.3% to the gross domestic products (GDP) of the country while the role of the sector on export and production of certified products for human consumption inland is negligible (Qureshi, 2011). During the recent years the government has placed the sector on National Development Agenda and Livestock Development Policy has been implemented focusing at private sector led livestock development, with the enabling environment provided by the government. Livestock and Dairy Development Board (LDDB) and Pakistan Dairy Development Company (PDDC) have been established in addition to other developmental organizations, to spearhead the development efforts. These two programs have been actively focusing on small and medium dairy farmers.

International Workshop on Dairy Science Park: was held at Agricultural University, Peshawar with the intention to develop a business incentives package with the help of provincial government and KPCCI for the farmers and graduates to develop the dairy related business and utilize the available resources productively. International investment will be explored through various sources including the foreign missions. A committee shaped up the recommendations into various components including Business Support, Infrastructural Support,

Legislative And Policy Support, Animal Production Support, Animal Health Support, Environment And Energy Solutions, Institutional Strengthening and Coordination. Various activities have been proposed for productivity enhancement and industrial applications. Some projects have been identified for implementation at AU Peshawar and the Livestock Trainers and Consultants. Besides the support already provided to the Faculty of AHVS, this University is also willing to sponsor some additional activities under endowment fund and will provide a liaison office to KPCCI for supporting commercially viable projects. The provincial government and other local and international donors are expected to sponsor some viable projects.

Punjab Agriculture & Meat Company: has been established under the provision of Section 42, Companies Ordinance 1984 with the goal to formalize meat industry by interventions at every tier that is meat production, processing and marketing, complying with all requites of international quality standards for human consumption. "Save The Calf" is a project, started by the Company, which is aimed to change this practice and enhance the meat production by collaborating directly with the farmers. This could prove to trigger an economic activity towards the establishment of the meat industry at the grass root level. The Company is encouraging livestock farmers to raise calf for meat by assisting Rs. 3,200 subsidy per animal, insurance, consultancy, veterinary services, medication and trainings. The strategic advantages behind this initiative is to provide a platform for the farmers, Milk Replacers and Animal Feed Manufacturer to work together towards an aligned goal. The Company also aims to modernize meat processing facilities in Pakistan, which currently do not meet the international hygienic standards. The plant at Shahpur Kanjran, called The Lahore Meat Processing Complex, is a stepping stone towards this objective, which would be the country's biggest plant. It is envisioned that all meat consumed locally in the country be processed through plants complied with the international standards of hygiene and Halal.

The scope: National livestock production comprises US\$ 22.5 b of milk and US\$ 6.0 b meat, contributed by cattle, buffalo, sheep and goats valuing US\$ 73 b. Our province contributes 14% of these assets. The meat and milk production of the country possess a fairly good capacity of export to the tune of 30% which can contribute a significant improvement in the national economy.

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