



LOKMAN HEKİM
UNIVERSITY

DIYANET
CENTER OF
AMERICA



HALAL LIFE

panel

HALAL SYMPOSIUM, WORKSHOP
AND NETWORK EVENT:
CONTEMPORARY
THOUGHTS
IN HALAL ECOSYSTEM

SYMPOSIUM BOOK

MARCH 8-9 / 2025
DIYANET CENTER OF AMERICA
& LOKMAN HEKİM UNIVERSITY

🌐 halallife.lokmanhekim.edu.tr
✉ halallife@diyanetamerica.org



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HALAL LIFE PANEL 2025

Editor

Assoc. Prof. Halide Rumeysa KÜÇÜKÖNER

Contributors

Assoc. Prof. Can TÜRK

Yılmaz ACAR

Graphics & Design

Mustafa ÇAKMAK

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FOREWORD

Prepared jointly by the Presidency of Diyanet Center of America and Lokman Hekim University
Halal Life Panel - March 8-9, 2025

As Diyanet Center of America and Lokman Hekim University, we take great pleasure in having successfully co-organized the “Halal Panel” on March 8-9, 2025. This significant event has not only contributed to the protection of Islamic sensitivities but has also served as a crucial step in reinforcing the awareness of halal living among Muslims in the United States.

The concept of halal is a fundamental value in Islam. It transcends dietary boundaries and extends into every aspect of life, including earnings, consumption, travel, commerce, health, and environmental responsibility. In this context, halal is not merely a preference for Muslims but a religious responsibility and a natural reflection of faith.

As members of the Muslim community in the United States, we recognize the growing importance of halal awareness in daily life. From the products we consume to the services we use, adhering to halal principles is both a spiritual duty and a moral commitment. This panel brought together esteemed scholars, professionals, and religious authorities to examine the subject of halal from both theoretical and practical angles.

We would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to all individuals and institutions who contributed to the success of this panel. We sincerely thank our distinguished speakers for sharing their knowledge and insights, and all participants for their interest and support. We believe this book of proceedings will enhance halal awareness, promote greater understanding within the Muslim community, and serve as a valuable resource for future generations.

May Allah bless us with sustenance that is pure and lawful, and guide us to live in accordance with halal principles throughout our lives.

Sincerely,

Prof. Fatih Gültekin

Assoc. Prof. Fatih Kanca

On behalf of Diyanet Center of America & Lokman Hekim University



INVITATION

Dear Academicians,

A halal lifestyle is a vital religious principle for Muslims and encompasses a wide range of essential goods and services, both edible and non-edible, that support survival, well-being and quality of life. Beyond providing a foundation for Muslims, this lifestyle also offers valuable opportunities to non-Muslims around the world. Rooted in nature and human nature, this lifestyle emphasizes health, cleanliness and sustainability in daily life, while also being in line with the purpose of existence. This approach has become even more important during the COVID-19 pandemic, emphasizing the importance of cleanliness, safety standards and natural human behavior.

Halal products and services not only address the high goals of Islamic law, but also comply with two important global frameworks: the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) principles. In light of these dynamics, Lokman Hekim University, which hosts Turkey's first and only Halal Product Application and Research Center, in collaboration with the Presidency of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Turkey, Diyanet Center of America (DCA), Standards and Metrology Institute for Islamic Countries (SMIIC) and Islamic Forum of Halal Accreditation Bodies (IFHAB), will organize the "Halal Symposium, Workshop and Networking Event: Contemporary Thoughts in the Halal Ecosystem" on March 8-9, 2025 at DCA. It will be held on the Lanham, MD campus.

This event aims to bring together academics, NGOs, halal certification bodies and industry leaders from both Turkey and the US to enhance bilateral understanding of halal certification and the challenges facing the sector. The symposium aims to promote dialogue on the broad impacts of halal practices across industries and daily life by emphasizing the importance of halal concepts in today's digitalized world. By emphasizing the academic, ethical, legal, social and conscientious dimensions of the halal lifestyle, we aim to demonstrate that this lifestyle is not only essential for Muslims, but also serves as a "safe haven" for all people globally.

We believe that the discussions and results of this symposium will provide valuable information and data for individuals who have adopted a halal lifestyle. The final report of the symposium is expected to provide practical guidance and serve as a roadmap for the dissemination of halal principles in all areas of modern life.

We invite you to join us at this important event and contribute your valuable expertise to the dialogue that will shape the future of the halal ecosystem.

Best regards
Organizing Committee



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- Zafer SOYLU (Islamic Halal Accreditation Forum)
- Dr. Ahmed EL-ZAREE (Emirates International Accreditation Centre)

Academic Secretariat

- Assoc. Prof. Halide Rumeysa KÜÇÜKÖNER

Contact

Assoc. Prof. Halide Rumeysa KÜÇÜKÖNER
halallife@diyanetamerica.org



SPEAKERS

- Ahmad Alzaree (Global Halal Foundation)
- Fatih Gültekin (Lokman Hekim University, Ankara, Türkiye)
- Fatih Kanca (Chairman of the Diyanet center of America)
- Habib D. Ghanim (USA Halal Chamber of Commerce, Inc.)
- Halide Rumeysa Küçüköner (George Mason University, USA)
- İbrahim Kürtül (Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal University, Türkiye)
- İhsan Övüt (Secretary General of SMIIC)
- Medet Coşkun (Presidency of Religious Affairs, Supreme Council of Religious Affairs)
- Mehmet Emin Tokuç (International Sales Manager, AFP)
- Mian Riaz (Texas A&M University)
- Zafer Soylu (Halal Accreditation Agency, Ankara, Türkiye)



CONTENTS

PROGRAM

SYMPOSIUM PROGRAM.....	10
------------------------	----

PRESENTATIONS

OIC/SMIIC STANDARDS ON HALAL ISSUES AND HALAL QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE İhsan Övüt (Secretary General of SMIIC).....	13
IMPORTANCE OF HALAL ACCREDITATION AND EXPERIENCES OF HAK Zafer Soylu (Halal Accreditation Agency, Ankara, Türkiye).....	16
CURRENT PROCESSES IN HALAL SLAUGHTERING: CATTLE, SHEEP, AND POULTRY İbrahim Kürtül (Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal University, Türkiye).....	22
HALAL MARKETING IN PRACTICE: LESSONS FROM THE FIELD Mehmet Emin Tokuş (International Sales Manager, AFP).....	30
LOKMAN HEKİM UNIVERSITY: A LEADER IN HALAL SCIENCE AND HEALTH EDUCATION Fatih Gültekin (Lokman Hekim University, Ankara, Türkiye).....	32
INDUSTRIAL FOOD PROCESSING (FOOD ADDITIVES) Fatih Gültekin (Lokman Hekim University, Ankara, Türkiye).....	35
THE CONCEPT OF HALAL LIFE Medet Coşkun (Presidency of Religious Affairs, Supreme Council of Religious Affairs).....	42
TOURISM AND ETHICS IN HALAL PRODUCTION Ahmad Alzaree (Global Halal Foundation).....	44
A FIQHI ANALYSIS OF THE CONCEPTS OF HALAL AND ZABIHA Fatih Kanca (Chairman of the Diyanet Center of America).....	46
FOOD ADDITIVES AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS IN THE FOOD INDUSTRY Mian Riaz (Texas A&M University)	48
DIFFICULTIES IN HALAL CERTIFICATION PROCESSES AND SOLUTIONS Mian Riaz (Texas A&M University).....	50
HALAL FOOD AMONG DIASPORA MUSLIMS Halide Rumeysa Küçüköner (George Mason University, USA)	51
THE RISING DEMAND FOR HALAL FOOD Habib D. Ghanim (USA Halal Chamber of Commerce, Inc.).....	56
CONCLUSION	
COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW.....	61
FINAL DECLARATION.....	64



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PROGRAM



SYMPOSIUM PROGRAM

8 MARCH 2025 WORKSHOP AND NETWORK EVENT: CONTEMPORARY THOUGHTS IN HALAL ECOSYSTEM	
Scope: Share bilateral insights on Halal certification and industry challenges, with contributions from academicians, NGOs, Halal certification bodies, and industry representatives from both Türkiye and the USA.	
10.00 - 10.30	Opening Speeches Assoc. Prof. Fatih Kanca (Diyanet Center of America) Dr. Mehmet Altuğ (Lokman Hekim University) İhsan Övüt (The Standards and Metrology Institute for Islamic Countries - SMIIC) Zafer Soylu (The Islamic Halal Accreditation Forum)
10.30 - 12.30	Session 1: Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) approach to the halal certification systems Moderator: Dr. Mian Riaz - Halal Certification system by SMIIC (İhsan Övüt, The Standards and Metrology Institute for Islamic Countries) - Halal Certification Accreditation system by IFHAP (Zafer Soylu, The Islamic Halal Accreditation Forum) - An example of academic halal studies: Lokman Hekim University (Prof. Fatih Gültekin, Lokman Hekim University)
12.30 - 13.30	BREAK
13.30 - 15.15	Session 2: Halal certification bodies in the USA; difficulties in halal certification processes and solutions Moderator: İhsan Övüt - The Halal Status of Additives: Challenges in the American Food Industry (Dr. Mian Riaz, Islamic Food and Nutrition Council of America IFANCA) - Challenges in halal industry and certification in North America (Habib Ghanim USA Halal Chamber of Commerce) - Halal Certification in America: Standards and Legal Framework (Muhammad M. Chaudry, Islamic Food and Nutrition Council of America IFANCA)
15.15 - 15.30	BREAK
15.45 - 16.45	Session 3: Experiences and Challenges of Consumers and Professionals in the Halal Market Industry Moderator: Assoc. Prof. Halide Rumeysa Küçüköner - Halal Marketing in Practice: Lessons from the Field (Mehmet Emin Tokuç, AFP Food Industry) - Tourism and Ethics in Halal Production (Dr. Ahmed El-Zaree, Emirates International Accreditation Centre)
16.45 - 17.15	CLOSING REMARKS

**9 MARCH 2025
HALAL SYMPOSIUM**

Scope: To engage the community and relevant stakeholders in a dialogue on the broader implications of Halal practices across industries and daily life.

14.00 - 14.20**Opening Speeches****Assoc. Prof. Fatih Kanca** (Diyamet Center of America)**Dr. Mehmet Altuğ** (Lokman Hekim University)**14.20 - 16.20****Panel****Moderator:** Assoc. Prof. Fatih Kanca

- Industrial food processing (food additives) (**Prof. Fatih Gültekin**, Lokman Hekim University)
- The Concept of Halal Life (**Dr. Medet Coşkun**, Presidency of Religious Affairs, Supreme Council of Religious Affairs)
- Current Processes in Halal Slaughtering: Cattle, Sheep, and Poultry (**Prof. İbrahim Kürtül**, Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal University) -Online-

16.20 - 16.30**CLOSING REMARKS****NETWORK EVENT****17.00 - 18.00****Introduction to Lokman Hekim University (LHU)**

(Conference Room / Oditorium Hall – to DMV Universities MSAs)



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PRESENTATIONS



OIC/SMIIC STANDARDS ON HALAL ISSUES AND HALAL QUALITY INFRASTRUCTURE

İhsan ÖVÜT
Secretary General of SMIIC
ihسان.ovut@smiic.org

SMIIC is an intergovernmental standardization organization, our members are states yet in SMIIC, they are represented by their authorized bodies. So, within our framework, public institutions play a predominant role. However, we cannot deny the role of private sector for halal industry given that our standards are mostly implemented by the producers and certifiers. That is why, we maintain close relations with the private sector mostly halal certification bodies. Furthermore, experts from the industry and businesses may contribute to our standards development work and capacity-building initiatives, training programs, and research collaborations can further enhance the contributions of both sectors.

The biggest challenge is not changing our perceptions or the things we have been taught for the greater good. It's about overcoming the resistance to questioning or adapting these long-held beliefs in the face of new understanding or progress. If we focus on the challenges related to Halal, we can identify many issues in both Muslim-majority and non-Muslim countries such as political issues, the reluctance to lose market advantage, and the strong desire of some countries to claim ownership over Halal market. However, I believe we cannot move forward by getting stuck on the problems, especially when we already have a clear solution that is now widely acknowledged. As SMIIC, we are developing Halal standards in the most professional way and providing capacity-building and training programs to countries that lack the necessary capabilities. Now, what we need is the commitment of countries to adopt OIC/SMIIC standards, join the IFHAB MRA, and work together to create a unified and trustworthy global Halal system.

Accreditation is a fundamental component of conformity assessment and essential for ensuring integrity and reliability. A robust quality infrastructure system cannot exist without accreditation which relies on unified standards. The same applies for halal accreditation. Just like it is embraced in the global system, we have a structure for halal as well, called OIC Global Quality Halal Quality Infrastructure (OHAQ). It relies on the unified OIC/SMIIC standards, metrology capacities for accurate test results and halal accreditation bodies.

Now that the IFHAB is established, the role of halal accreditation continues to expand and gain significance. According to its Statute and OIC resolutions, the IFHAB will use OIC/SMIIC standards. This is the long-awaited structure that the halal industry was looking forward to. A unified system strengthens the halal economy and promotes fair competition among businesses.

IFHAB has its second General Assembly meeting in last December, the members of its important committees were elected. Hopefully, in the upcoming period they will focus on the finalization of the technical documents to be used for the Multilateral Recognition



Arrangement, in short MRA, which is a key mechanism supporting this unified approach.

The MRA will allow mutual recognition of halal certificates among member countries, reducing duplication of efforts and lowering costs for businesses. This recognition is essential for smooth trade and market access, as it eliminates the need for repeated testing and certification.

Building and maintaining consumer for halal system requires a strong and harmonized quality infrastructure led by credible institutions. SMIIC plays a crucial role by developing unified Halal standards through our well-established standards development system. OIC/SMIIC standards are the result of the dedicated efforts of experts from our member states.

When standards are strong and of high quality, certification and accreditation bodies can operate more efficiently and effectively, ensuring a more reliable and trustworthy system. This, in turn, enhances consumer confidence, as they can trust that Halal-certified products meet rigorous and consistent requirements. The recent establishment of the IFHAB further strengthens this framework by fostering mutual recognition among Halal accreditation bodies.

Encouraging non-Muslim countries to implement halal standards without causing religious sensitivities involves framing halal as a quality and safety assurance rather than solely a religious practice. Highlighting the benefits of halal certification for businesses, such as access to growing global markets and the assurance of ethical production processes, can make adoption more appealing. Last year, we witnessed Vietnam's strong desire to establish a Halal system, and they are eager to learn from SMIIC to ensure consistency and credibility in their Halal certification process. We are giving trainings to halal certification bodies from all around the world including many non-Muslim countries that are using OIC/SMIIC standards. And of course, this interest is largely due to the international structure of SMIIC which is why the roles of SMIIC and IFHAB will become even more important in the coming period.

Muslims are spread all around the world, and OIC countries span across four continents. As a population, we're talking about one-fourth of the world. Of course nothing would be easy when we think of these aspects. However, we have platforms, human capacity, expertise and necessary skills to find what is best for us. SMIIC and IFHAB are the fruits of that kind of collaboration and efforts. So, the future of the Halal industry lies in believing in ourselves, sharing our vision and capabilities through these platforms, and contributing with each other's capacity for collective growth and success. Using OIC/SMIIC standards is the future, embracing accreditation is the future, becoming signatory of the MRA structure of the IFHAB is future. But, we must act now, without delay, to implement what will benefit the entire Ummah.

- The continuous growth and diversification of the halal industry have driven the vital work of technical committees. By 2025, SMIIC has successfully published 58 OIC/SMIIC standards, with 20 exclusively dedicated to halal-related topics. These comprehensive standards include a wide range of areas, including halal food, additives, tourism, gelatine,



halal management systems, animal feed, pharmaceuticals, and the halal supply chain, among others. Each of these guidelines plays a pivotal role in harmonizing practices across the global halal industry.

- At present, SMIIIC has 48 member states and is working on more than 91 ongoing standardization projects, encompassing areas such as halal spas, supply chain ports, and leather production.
- We have organized more than 130 capacity building and training programs both for our members and the relevant organizations.
- We are maintaining close dialogue with the ISO, ARSO, GSO, AIDSMO and IFHAB, organizing joint activities or participating and promoting each other's events.



IMPORTANCE OF HALAL ACCREDITATION AND EXPERIENCES OF HAK

Zafer Soylu
zafer.soylu@hak.gov.tr
Halal Accreditation Agency, Ankara, Türkiye

Abstract

The interest and demand for the certification of halal products and services of the approximately 1.8 billion Muslim population living in the world is increasing. Today, the concept of halal is not limited to food products; it addresses a wide range of sectors such as finance, textiles, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, logistics and tourism. The fact that the concept of halal includes the features of being “healthy, hygienic and high quality” at every stage from the production of products to the consumer is an indication that the awareness in this field will continue to increase. However, it is also seen that a common and harmonized language has not been established among Muslim countries in halal certification. Due to the disorganized structure in the field of halal, existing halal certification practices may appear as technical barriers in trade. With the growth of the global market for halal products and services, the barriers created by different halal standards and certification systems on international trade are becoming evident. In 2010, the Standards and Metrology Institute for Islamic Countries (SMIIC), an affiliate of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, was established to ensure uniformity in standardization, metrology and conformity assessment activities among Muslim member states. Within the framework of halal accreditation activities, steps are taken to remove technical barriers to trade through standardization processes, and conformity assessment activities are aimed to be strengthened by harmonizing them with the international system. In this context, the Halal Accreditation Agency (HAK) was established as the only institution authorized to provide halal accreditation services in Türkiye in order to carry out activities in the field of halal accreditation in Türkiye and abroad, to represent Türkiye in halal accreditation activities in international platforms and to take the lead in these activities. HAK represents Türkiye in the Islamic Forum of Halal Accreditation Bodies (IFHAB), which will establish a system for the mutual recognition of internationally accredited halal certificates.

Keywords: Halal Accreditation Agency (HAK), Islamic Forum of Halal Accreditation Bodies (IFHAB), halal quality infrastructure, halal accreditation, OIC/SMIIC halal standards, harmonized halal standards, halal certification

Introduction

Certification and accreditation are important elements in establishing a halal quality infrastructure and play a critical role in the creation, maintenance and continuous development of the market for halal certified products and services. The concepts of certification and accreditation are vital in ensuring that consumers around the world have access to safe, hygienic and high quality products and services. However, despite the rapid expansion of the market, a certification approach based on internationally recognized and harmonized



standards has not yet been adopted. This fragmented certification approach leads to various challenges, including technical barriers to trade, reduced consumer confidence and inefficient use of financial and ethical resources.

There are forecasts that the halal economy will grow significantly from 2022 to 2027. This growth will not be limited to food, but also cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, tourism, media, textiles and finance. The Standards and Metrology Institute for Islamic Countries (SMIIC), an international organization affiliated to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), publishes the OIC/SMIIC halal standards, which have significant applicability in addressing the challenges in the global halal market.

Conformity assessment bodies are accredited by Türkiye's Halal Accreditation Agency (HAK) based on the OIC/SMIIC halal standards, proving their capacity to provide reliable certification services.

Established in 2019, HAK operates as the sole authorized body in Turkey and acts as an important component of the halal quality infrastructure. In addition to its accreditation activities, HAK organizes technical trainings within the framework of OIC/SMIIC halal standards, signs cooperation protocols and conducts bilateral studies to assess bilateral cooperation opportunities and to establish and develop halal quality infrastructure within the framework of OIC/SMIIC halal standards.

In addition to halal accreditation activities, HAK continues its efforts to pioneer the steps to be taken in the international arena for the establishment of a system for multilateral recognition of halal certificates among countries through the accreditation mechanism within the framework of OIC/SMIIC halal standards.

Standards and Metrology Institute for Islamic Countries (SMIIC)

Established in 2010 as an OIC affiliated organization with 45 members and 3 observer members, SMIIC aims to help remove technical barriers to trade by preparing common standards on behalf of member states as a robust mechanism for the harmonization of standards and the preparation of new ones among OIC states, thereby improving trade. It is known that the differences between countries in standardization, conformity assessment, metrology and accreditation practices are indirect technical barriers to trade. In this sense, harmonization of standards and conformity assessment procedures carried out under the umbrella of an international or regional organization aims to eliminate factors that are likely to adversely affect trade in the states concerned. It also includes establishing common certification systems, starting with mutual recognition of documents, in order to accelerate the mutual exchange of products and services. SMIIC aims to ensure uniformity in standardization, metrology and conformity assessment activities among its members and to provide training and vocational training as well as technical support to OIC member countries within the scope of standardization and metrology. Within the scope of accreditation activities, it is aimed to strengthen the steps taken to remove technical barriers to trade through standardization activities by ensuring the conformity of conformity assessment activities with the international system.



SMIIC has come a long way so far, working for the establishment of a credible and reliable halal certification system based on international standards prepared with the joint efforts and contributions of the member countries of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and based on fiqh. Today, SMIIC, which has 45 permanent and 3 observer members, has published more than 50 standards, 20 of which are in the field of halal. OIC/SMIIC standards set out the minimum requirements for a business operating in the food, cosmetics, catering or tourism sector, ranging from production and service delivery principles to information-document management and environmental conditions.

Halal Accreditation Agency (HAK) was established in 2019 in order to audit the organizations issuing halal certificates and to determine whether halal certificates are reliable by completing the institutional and legislative infrastructure as well as presenting its contributions in the field of halal in the international platform within the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and SMIIC.

Halal Accreditation Agency (HAK)

HAK is the only institution authorized to accredit halal conformity assessment bodies in Türkiye, established to operate in the field of halal accreditation in Türkiye and abroad. Since the establishment of HAK, the importance of halal certification and halal accreditation in Türkiye has been increasing day by day.

Having started its accreditation activities in the field of food, HAK expanded its accreditation service scale in 2022 and started to accredit halal certification activities in important areas such as cosmetics, catering and tourism in addition to food in the field of products and services. In addition to this, HAK, breaking new ground in Türkiye, started to accredit personnel certification bodies and laboratories according to the OIC/SMIIC approach. In this way, HAK has contributed to the development of the halal certification sector by covering not only food but also many other markets and to the creation of a reliable environment for all stakeholders. In the short period of time since its establishment, it has received 196 halal accreditation applications from 36 different countries and 105 of these applications have been accredited. As a result, the halal certificates of more than 2,000 facilities have been secured with accreditation.

In addition, as a result of the amendment to the Law published in the Official Gazette dated June 4, 2022, it has been stipulated that all institutions issuing halal certificates for products and services to be supplied to the domestic market, including imported ones, shall be accredited by HAK as of June 4, 2023 after a transition period of 1 year. With this regulation, although the certification of products and services to be offered to consumers as 'halal' will continue on a voluntary basis, it has been made compulsory for the organizations that will issue these certificates to be audited and accredited by HAK to verify that they operate in accordance with international standards.

The main purpose of the aforementioned obligation is to ensure that the halal signs that consumers see on the products they access on the market shelves are regulated by competent, impartial and audited institutions and thus to prevent misleading and unauthorized information to consumers regarding halal.



In addition to its accreditation activities, HAK has signed a memorandum of understanding with SMIIC to become a “Training Base” in the field of halal quality infrastructure around the world, and has organized 60 trainings with different contents, reaching more than 1300 participants from 35 countries. The “certificate of achievement” issued to the participants who are successful in technical trainings is recognized by SMIIC and is internationally valid and provides employment opportunities to sector professionals operating in this field.

In addition, since its establishment, HAK has signed memorandums of understanding with countries such as Algeria, Qatar, Sudan, Uzbekistan, Indonesia, Cambodia and there are still others in the process of signature. Domestically, HAK has signed protocols and bilateral agreements with institutions such as TÜRKAK, TİKA, Lokman Hekim University and Union of Municipalities of Türkiye (TBB).

In addition to its halal accreditation activities, HAK also plays an active role on a global scale. Through HAK’s efforts, an international organization called “Islamic Forum of Halal Accreditation Bodies (IFHAB)” was established as an affiliate of the OIC and operates as an umbrella organization for halal accreditation bodies. OIC/SMIIC aims to establish a common halal quality infrastructure based on halal standards. IFHAB aims to ensure that accreditation bodies in the system recognize each other through multilateral recognition agreements within the framework of harmonized standards and that other members accept halal certificates accredited by a member country without additional evaluation.

Islamic Forum for Halal Accreditation Bodies (IFHAB)

Today some countries seek a halal certificate within the framework of the rules/standards they set for the import of halal certified products and services and require that this halal certificate be obtained from a certification body authorized by itself or from a certification body accredited by its own accreditation body. Thus, both producers are forced to obtain more than one certificate and certification bodies need to be accredited by different accreditation bodies. It is clear that this approach will cause an increase in product costs and create technical barriers in trade between countries. In order to eliminate these problems, a system that will allow mutual recognition of internationally accredited halal certificates is needed. For this purpose, as a result of intensive efforts, it was decided to establish the “Islamic Forum of Halal Accreditation Bodies (IFHAB)” based in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and having the status of an affiliated organization of the OIC at the 49th Meeting of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers held in Mauritania/Nuakşot on 16-17 March 2023. With the acceptance of the IFHAB documents prepared by the Task Force Group (TFG) chaired by HAK at the 6th Meeting of the SMIIC Accreditation Council Executive held in Istanbul on 6-7 September 2023, the basic legislative infrastructure of IFHAB was established and the activities of the TFG for the establishment of IFHAB were successfully completed under the leadership of our country. The first General Assembly Meeting of IFHAB was held on November 1, 2023 in Mecca al-Mukarrama. At the meeting, it was decided that the interim board of directors would consist of 9 members, including our Agency. It was also reported that the official website of IFHAB was established and launched with the domain address <https://www.ifhab.org>. As declared in the IFHAB statute and website, the duties of IFHAB are summarized as follows:



1. To build global trust in products and services with the Halal logo,
2. To contribute to the establishment of an open and transparent system for halal products and services by Islamic provisions and technical requirements and in line with international practices,
3. To establish standards of trust that will apply to trade in Halal products and services between OIC Member Countries and globally,
4. To unify the procedures and practices of Halal accreditation activities in Islamic countries,
5. To ensure that a halal certificate accredited by one of the member countries is accepted by other members without the need for additional audits through multilateral recognition agreements,
6. Developing accreditation infrastructure in OIC member countries in order to achieve international recognition in the field of Halal.

The second general assembly and the third executive committee meetings of IFHAB were held on December 18-19, 2024 in Mecca al-Mukarrama. In these meetings, the statute was adopted and it was decided to continue with the same executive committee for another 3 years. In addition, technical, mutual recognition and media and communication committees were established.

Mutual recognition of halal certificates and thus accreditation through IFHAB will prevent duplicate halal certification. It will be sufficient for an exporter company to obtain a halal certificate accredited by one of the member accreditation bodies of IFHAB, and there will be no need to obtain a different halal certificate from other member countries. A similar situation will be valid for certification bodies, and if they are accredited by one of the member accreditation bodies, they will be recognized by other members. Thus, IFHAB, which is of great importance for both producers, consumers and certification bodies, will remove the barriers to trade between OIC member countries and globally and at the same time increase the trust in halal certificates.

Conclusion

Due to the globalized trade in today's world, the conformity of products and services such as food, cosmetics, tourism activities prepared especially for Muslim societies with the requirements of Islam is being questioned. Halal certification, which emerged in response to this questioning, is a solution to the issue, but it has caused other problems to arise. In this field, where the volume of trade is increasing day by day, especially the fact that each country creates its own conditions and standards leads to technical barriers for producers and service providers. The permanent elimination of these obstacles is possible through the use of SMIIC standards in all member countries where a large number of Muslims are stakeholders through their countries, the implementation of halal accreditation through the presence of accreditation bodies working in the field of activity of HAK in all OIC member countries, and the mutual recognition of these organizations under the umbrella of IFHAB.

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CURRENT PROCESSES IN HALAL SLAUGHTERING: CATTLE, SHEEP, AND POULTRY

Prof. İbrahim Kürtül
ibrahimkurtul@ibu.edu.tr
Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal University, Türkiye

Abstract

Today, slaughtering farm animals in a very short time period, and making them ready for consumption as various meat products are only possible with the fully automated systems of the slaughterhouse, which works as like a meat production factory. The poultry slaughterhouses in particular have become advanced, autonym operating fields with a very high production capacity at a very short period of time with a quality controlled integration process. Therefore, knowing the details of the processes that an animal, which is thought to have no problem in terms of religious sensitivities during the breeding period, is exposed to throughout all the stages of these systems will help clarify the concepts of Halal-Haram that may be shaped in the minds of the consumer. The stages that should be known and controlled in terms of religious sensitivity in the slaughter processes of the farm animals are the following; Ante- mortem inspection, stunning, exsanguination (sticking or bleeding) by hand or machine especially poultry, skinning (removal of skin), plucking feathers by scalding in poultry, evisceration (removal of guts), post-mortem inspection, final carcass preparation, and chilling. As far as the halal concept is concerned, apart from the meticulous compliance with the hygienic rules at all stages of the process, the stunning, slaughtering, and feather softening-plucking stages in poultry are always vital critical and strategic processes at any time. The modern mechanical method of stunning by shooting or electricity to immobilize-to make animal unconscious for the operational easiness and animal rights concern has been, and will always be in question by Muslims since, in accordance with the Sharia law in general, the animal must be conscious right before the slaughter process and should be death due to bleeding. Controversial ideas have been raised on whether this method meets the full conditions of the halal slaughtering, zabiha, Dhabihah, the Islamic procedure of bleeding a conscious animal by killing through a cut to the jugular vein, carotid artery, oesophagus and trachea right after reciting Basmala for meat.

Overall, the method of stunning by shooting or electricity to immobilize-to make animal that cause to death is unacceptable by the Halal concept. On the other hand, stunning processes that does not kill animal, exsanguination (sticking or bleeding) by machine especially poultry and plucking feathers by scalding in poultry are yet to be fully concluded in terms of the Halal concept.

Keywords: Animal welfare, Halal slaughtering, stunning, farm animals, hand slaughter, poultry



Introduction

All sectors in agriculture and animal husbandry have recently become an industrial sector including animal slaughterhouses, especially broiler, working as meat production centres. In a very short period of time, thousands of animals are slaughtered, dissected and made ready for consumption in different meat products. Slaughtering thousands of animals and making them ready for consumption in such a short time depends on the slaughterhouse creating a fully automated system like a meat production factory with high-speed cutting. Considering that 2-3 chickens are slaughtered in one second by hanging on the moving belt system and enter the dismemberment chain, the processes that the animal is exposed to during the slaughter process should be handled one by one and revealed transparently for consumers with religious sensitivity. Knowing the processes that an animal, which is thought to have no problems in terms of care and nutrition in terms of religious sensitivities during breeding, is exposed to during the slaughter process will help clarify the concepts of “Halal-Haram” that may be shaped in the minds of the consumer. Apart from the stages that should be known and controlled in terms of religious sensitivity in the animal slaughter process in the slaughterhouse and the strict compliance with the cleaning rules at all stages of the process, the stunning and feather softening-plucking processes applied in poultry, especially before slaughter, are very important practices that should always be under controlled. This review comprehensively summarizes the available scientific literature on the processes of Halal meat production particularly focusing on the stunning methods and status of the exsanguination (sticking or bleeding) by machine and plucking feathers by scalding in poultry in view of their Halal compliance during the slaughter of animals.

Halal slaughter, *zabiha*, *Dhabihah*, the Islamic procedure of bleeding an animal right after reciting Basmala for meat is defined very clearly, and efforts continue to issue religious rulings (Fatwa) to approve the practice, requiring that when animals are slaughtered, they must be slaughtered in the mindful and attentive way embraced by the Prophet Muhammad (PUH). In the “General Requirements for Halal Food” standard prepared by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) / Islamic Countries Standards and Metrology Institute (SMIIC), the Halal slaughter rules of ovine and bovine butchery animals have been determined. The rules which must be followed in the slaughter of butchered animals are emphasized (OIC/ SMIIC, 2019; Alemdar et al, 2022). Furthermore, animal slaughter, as is the case in the Halal slaughter, is critical for meat quality, meat safety and animal welfare (Nakyinsige et al, 2014). Yet, Halal slaughter is a prerequisite to produce Halal meat and products, including a concept in which pre-cutting, cutting process and post-cutting are reclaimed together. Each stage within this concept must meet certain rules (Zainalabidin et al, 2019).

Islam implements zero-tolerance to all forms of animal abuse throughout the Halal meat production and supply chain. The following issues are of essential regulations that need always to be taken into consideration; training of workers on the religious and regulatory requirements of animal welfare at all processes, empathy and compassion of employee, installation of CCTV cameras, regular employee follow-up training, incorporating animal welfare requirements in Halal certification, regular in-service training Scholars to increase awareness of animal welfare issues, and making portable humane slaughter units available to small operations and home/neighbourhood-slaughter by mosque-based organizations/



structures (Sazili et al, 2023; Farouk et al, 2016).

The following stages are employed during the slaughter of farm animals in contemporary slaughterhouses; ante-mortem inspection, stunning, exsanguination (sticking or bleeding), skinning (removal of skin), evisceration (removal of guts), post-mortem inspection, final carcass preparation, and chilling. On the Halal slaughter, along with profound compliance with the hygienic rules at all stages of the process, the stunning, slaughtering, and feather softening-plucking stages in poultry are always vital critical and strategic processes at any time. The rules of the Halal slaughter are ratified and announced by OIC/SMIIC even though they are not accepted unanimously by Muslim scholars on the issue of the application of stunning in the Halal slaughtering of animals. Critical control points on Halal slaughter are determined by the literature and OIC/SMIIC (Alemdar et al, 2022; OIC/SMIIC, 2019; Pufpaff et al, 2019). Debates on the stunning and feather softening-plucking stages in poultry still go on.

Ante-mortem inspection

Ante mortem means the inspection of the live animal before death. The inspector checks animals whether they are healthy enough to be slaughter for meat need. Animals with signs of a fever or abnormal behaviour, particularly those which might have a central nervous system disease are separated and treated specially.

Stunning

In animal slaughterhouses, stunning process are widely practiced just before or immediately after slaughter, mostly with the application of electric current. In addition, there is a gas stunning method that is not applied in Türkiye at this stage but is applied in European countries on the grounds of animal welfare. The modern mechanical method of stunning by shooting or electricity, using of a captive bolt pistol which delivers a force into the head of the animal or using of a penetrating free-bullet gun or firearm killing animal before the slaughter process is completely unacceptable in accordance with the Sharia law in general since the animal has to be conscious right before the slaughter process, and should be death due to bleeding.

Stunning procedure is carried out in order to ensure that the slaughterer works more comfortably in the slaughterhouse, to provide a smoother approach for animals to the slaughtering machine, and to provide animal welfare requirements (OIC/SMIIC, 2019; Nazırlı, 2017; Philippine National Standard, 2016a; Philippine National Standard, 2016b; Pufpaff et al, 2019). A debate continues over the acceptability of stunning for Halal slaughter. Even though pre-slaughter stunning is becoming a common practice during Halal slaughter due to the increasing number of countries which continue to issue religious rulings to approve the practice in certain conditions. Appropriate stunning makes animals unconscious instantaneously, avoiding unnecessary pain and stress during the slaughter (Weaver and Wotton, 2008; Blackmore and Newhook 1982; Gilbert and Devine 1982). Thereby, the issue of maximum blood loss, reversibility of consciousness, and remaining of the animal alive during the slaughter process are the vital determinants to approve stunning in the Halal slaughter. Wrong stunning because of the poor maintenance of equipment,



false applications, and incorrect restraining requires additional stunning attempts, which further increases pain and stress in animals. Halal-compliant stunning technologies need to be reversible, do not kill animals prior to the Halal cut, and do not hinder bleeding. Scientific research should be conducted to carry out further on the refinement of available stunning technologies and their implementation, suitable restraints, proper identification of the death status of animals, and reassurance of animal welfare in commercial Halal meat production (Sazili et al, 2023; Farouk et al, 2016).

In poultry slaughterhouses, it is vital to check that the stun processing device is properly adjusted in terms of religious sensitivities. Since the power and frequency range of the electric current used during this process varies a lot, the event should be evaluated in detail. As the current strength is pulled downwards, as in the example of 10-30 V, the stress and its effects decrease as the frequency of the current increases, so the vitality activities of the animal during and after this process can be better observed. When the chicken subjected to electric current is taken out of the hanger and put on the ground, it regains consciousness within 1-2 minutes under normal conditions and acts by reacting to an external stimulus. In the new generation stun machines with high frequency (100 Hz and higher frequency) and relatively low voltage (10-50 V), especially eye-related reflexes such as following the finger movements of the chicken can be clearly tested in chickens subjected to electric current. This further clarifies the arguments put forward by proponents and opponents of pre-slaughter stunning for Halal production and examines the criteria used by Halal Certification Bodies to identify and reject animals that may die because of irreversible stunning and considers the specific risks of stunning from a Halal viewpoint. It also prevents the unconscious chicken from lifting its head and passing through the slaughtering machine without cutting and wing cuts. Upon permitting water-bath electrical stunning of Halal poultry, the stunning current needed to induce unconsciousness must be defined for the breed and bird size but not cause any chicken deaths. In addition, these procedures are carried out to prevent the meat quality from decreasing due to bone fractures caused by the fluttering of the chicken during slaughter and fractures caused by impact. Again, stunning operations are carried out for the comfortable work of the employees who control the chickens after slaughter, slaughter the chickens that escape from the slaughter if slaughtering is done with a machine, and have difficulty working due to the blood splashed on them because of fluttering. When the stunning processes are not performed, the slaughtered chicken flutters and the broken and dislocated wings cannot be plucked because the broken and protruding wings cannot be fixed in the plucking machines due to the weak bone structure, and the feathered wings cause serious economic loss. In this way, the wing fracture rate is up to 25-30%. Wings that cannot be plucked can be mixed with other waste sent for rendering.

The chicken exposed to electricity for 6-10 seconds depending on the length of the electrifying system enters the slaughtering machine approximately 8-10 seconds after leaving this system. If cutting by hand, the cut is made within 1-10 seconds. Under the influence of electricity, the chicken's contracted neck becomes free-swinging after 9-10 seconds, and the wings gradually fall. This time and this position of the chicken are ideal for machine cutting. If the time is short, the chicken may come out of the slaughterer without being cut, as the neck has not yet loosened. In this case, the cutting is done manually by the control personnel. On the other hand, if the time is extended too much, the machine blade



that cuts the head may damage the wings, and wings fall completely down. Furthermore, in cases where the electric current rises to 80-90 V during the stunning process, death can be observed at a rate of 24%-37%, chicken death as a result of exposure to electric current do not react during slaughter, and colour changes ranging from pink to red and easily visible to the naked eye are observed in the carcass (Fuseini et al, 2016). This is because the heart stops before the slaughter, unable to pump blood out of the body, and excess blood remains in the body. Naturally, the fact that chicken meat with such discolorations cannot be sold in the market reveals the conclusion that producers should be extraordinarily careful not to slaughter dead animals.

Exsanguination (Sticking or Bleeding)

For Halal slaughter, along with the terms of religious sensitivity and strict compliance with the cleaning rules at all stages of the process, animals must die due to bleeding. They must be positioned first for bleeding, a sticking knife is used to open the thick skin at the base of the neck behind the jaw bone and below the first neck bone of the animal, then to cut off the major blood vessels, oesophagus and trachea. The bleeding should be as complete as possible, the usual time for sheep and goats being about 2 minutes. The duration of bleeding should be sufficient for the bleeding to be completed and for death to occur in full. The procedure of cutting the spinal cord of the animal to induce bleeding should be carried out only after the animal has died. The Nahr technique should be used in camel slaughter. Care is needed because bacteria may be carried into the animal. Veins may have negative pressure, thus yielding bacteria rapidly to the meat deep in the carcass (Alemdar et al, 2022; Al-Teinaz, 2020; Philippine National Standard, 2016b; Alişarlı, 2011). The rules of the Halal control points in mechanical slaughter of poultry (OIC/SMIIC, 2019) and farm animals (Pufpaff et al, 2019) are explained in detail.

In poultry slaughter, mechanical cutting is used if a validation system is available even though there is a concern whether the procedure is Halal or not. There must be an appropriate labelling on the product indicating that mechanical cutting has been carried out. A manual slaughter validation system need to be available to apply the process. There must be an appropriate labelling on the product indicating that it has been cut by hand. When slaughtering poultry by hand, the following rules must be observed in poultry (OIC/SMIIC, 2019; Shahdan et al, 2017) and in farm animals (Pufpaff et al, 2019).

Skinning (removal of skin)

Removing the skin around the body of the farm animals including cattle by either skinning knife or machine is a relatively simple process which needs to be performed under hygienic conditions.

In integrated poultry slaughterhouses, the feathers are mechanically removed through using a moving belt system by either "wet plucking" or "dry plucking" methods. After the blood drains as much as possible following slaughter, the chickens go through a process that is mostly carried out in the form of immersion in hot water and lasts between 1.5-4 minutes, depending on the temperature of the water. This process, which is generally



called the scalding process, can also be done by hot water spraying and steam methods. During this process, the temperature of the water in the feather softening machine called the scalding boiler, through which the chicken passes, is the same on all sides, making it easier to pluck the feathers. The temperature of the water in the feather softening machine is evenly distributed by mixing it with air or with the help of a pump. The chicken must be dead before it enters the feather smoothing machine. If it is still alive, it is caused by the effort of breathing, such as the trachea and oesophagus, and the subsequent lungs and stomachs.

Chickens slaughtered in the wet plucking system enter the feather softening machine with their internal organs. Therefore, at this stage of the chicken slaughter-shredding process, the degree of the temperature of the water used by the system is a critical point as to whether the chicken meat subjected to this process is "clean or dirty" and whether it fulfils the religious "Halal" condition. This is again a very hot topic having been debated for years. The temperature of the wet plucking system is in the range of 50 to 60°C. Scientific research states that the system water should not exceed 54°C (Yetim ve Türker, 2020; OIC/SMIIC, 2019; Nazırlı, 2017). In chickens exposed to higher temperature, the protective peculiarities of the skin are lost as the collagen and elastic fibres in its structure start degenerating and cause impurities to infect the meat. With this degeneration, the integrity of the tissue is broken down and the dirty water enters through the resulting pores, contaminating meat. In this case, the meat may become inedible because it is "dirty". However, if water in which the chicken is immersed is not boiling water, waiting there for a few minutes does not basically allow this possibility. After scalding, the removal of feathers is carried out with mechanical plucking machines. This stage is followed by the washing process.

Evisceration (Removal of Guts), Post-mortem inspection, Final carcass preparation, Chilling With the removal of external structures, skin, feet and head, abdominal and thoracic cavities are opened to perform the procedure of internal organ removal manually or with machines. After the subsequent washing and cooling processes, the carcass is packaged as either whole or shredded products. The end products, the meat, is cooled down at 4 °C for immediate consumption or at -18°C&-36°C for later usage.

Conclusion

Automated slaughterhouse systems function as meat production factories. The poultry slaughterhouses in particular are now autonym operating fields with a very high production capacity at a very short period of time with a quality controlled integration process. All the stages of these systems need to be controlled fully upon the concepts of Halal-Haram that may be shaped in the minds of the consumer. Along with the meticulous compliance with the hygienic rules at all stages of the process, the stunning, slaughtering, and feather softening-plucking stages in poultry are always vital critical and strategic processes at any time. These processes are in question by Muslims since, in accordance with the Sharia law in general, the animal must be conscious right before the slaughter process and should be death due to bleeding. Concerns are high on whether this method meets the full conditions of the Halal slaughtering. In general, the method of stunning by shooting or electricity to immobilize-to make animal that cause to death is unacceptable by the Halal concept. On



the other hand, stunning processes that does not kill animal, exsanguination (sticking or bleeding) by machine especially poultry and plucking feathers by scalding in poultry are yet to be fully concluded in terms of the Halal concept.

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HALAL MARKETING IN PRACTICE: LESSONS FROM THE FIELD

Mehmet Emin Tokuç
International Sales Manager, AFP
emin.tokuc@afpllc.com

Abstract This paper presents real-world insights into the halal marketing landscape from the perspective of a global food manufacturing and export firm. It explores the core challenges faced by producers and exporters, especially small and medium-sized enterprises, in obtaining and maintaining halal certification. The discussion includes financial burdens, regulatory inconsistencies, lack of awareness, and geopolitical complexities. The author proposes collaborative and pragmatic approaches to ensure halal food becomes more accessible, affordable, and authentically aligned with Islamic principles.

1. **Introduction** The halal food market is rapidly expanding worldwide, yet industry practitioners face practical and systemic barriers in implementing halal standards. This paper shares firsthand experiences from international halal trade, focusing on key impediments such as certification costs, lack of unified standards, regulatory ambiguity, and limited communication between stakeholders.

2. **Economic Challenges in Halal Certification** Halal certification and audit costs have increased significantly in recent years. Many export clients, particularly small and medium-sized companies, face profit margins too narrow to absorb additional halal certification fees. As these businesses often rely on limited product volumes, paying for audits per SKU creates financial stress and discourages participation in the halal ecosystem.

Manufacturers often cover the general audit expenses; however, some countries demand that each customer undergo separate audits, placing unnecessary financial burdens on companies that do not even manufacture the products. This model disincentivizes halal compliance and restricts market access.

3. **Lack of Technical and Market Awareness** A common challenge is that clients involved in distribution, rather than manufacturing, lack technical knowledge of food production processes. These stakeholders are required to apply for halal certification without having the requisite operational insight. This disconnect leads to inefficiencies and redundant administrative demands.

4. **Regulatory and Certification Barriers** Regulatory updates in various countries often occur without prior notification or explanation. For instance, sudden rule changes in major halal-consuming markets can disrupt supply chains and confuse stakeholders. Without adequate communication from certifying bodies, businesses struggle to remain compliant.

Moreover, the absence of a universally recognized halal certificate creates complications. Each country or region—e.g., Malaysia (JAKIM), Indonesia (LHP LLPOM MUI), Saudi Arabia (SFDA and SHC), UAE (ESMA), South Africa (SANHA)—maintains its own requirements, increasing both cost and complexity.



5. Political and Strategic Issues The global halal market is also impacted by political rivalries, where countries compete over who upholds stricter halal standards. This competitive dynamic fragments the industry instead of fostering unity. Rather than promoting the halal ethos, these practices hinder the overarching goal of making halal food accessible to all.

6. Proposed Strategic Solutions To move forward, the halal food ecosystem must adopt a collaborative approach involving manufacturers, religious scholars, certifying bodies, and governmental entities. The objective should be to:

- Harmonize halal standards globally.
- Reduce redundant audits and financial barriers.
- Improve communication and transparency.
- Embrace solution-oriented frameworks that prioritize cleanliness, affordability, and widespread availability.

7. Conclusion The halal food industry is at a pivotal moment. While demand grows, so too do the challenges. A unified, pragmatic approach—rooted in shared Islamic values and economic rationality—can help overcome current barriers. The halal industry should prioritize accessibility, avoid excessive bureaucracy, and align with its ethical and spiritual mission.



LOKMAN HEKİM UNIVERSITY: A LEADER IN HALAL SCIENCE AND HEALTH EDUCATION

Prof. Fatih Gültekin
faith.gultekin@lokmanhekim.edu.tr
Lokman Hekim University, Ankara, Türkiye

Located in the heart of Ankara, the capital of Türkiye, Lokman Hekim University (LHU) is a distinguished institution dedicated to advancing health sciences with a strong emphasis on Halal research and innovation. Established in 2017 by “Sevgi Vakfı” (the Love Foundation) LHU has rapidly proved itself as a key player in health sciences education and research, offering 11 associate degree programs, 15 undergraduate programs, 46 graduate programs, and 30 specialization programs across a fair number of health disciplines.

With its modern infrastructure and a dedicated faculty of renowned scholars, LHU fosters an interdisciplinary approach to medical sciences education. It emphasizes evidence-based research, ethical practice toward healthcare, and the optimal integration of advanced technology with a view to assuring that students receive a world-class education.

LHU’s strong concentration on Halal research and certification places it at the forefront of a rapidly growing national and global industry. The university actively cooperates and collaborates with international organizations, research institutions, and certification bodies to be able to establish scientifically validated Halal standards. Through its cutting-edge laboratories and innovation-driven programs, it would be fair to state that LHU is currently shaping the next generation of health professionals and researchers who uphold both scientific excellence alongside academic and ethical integrity.

In addition to its academic programs, LHU provides all the learners with a highly dynamic learning environment, offering access to Türkiye’s second-largest medical simulation center, high-tech research facilities, and an extensive digital library. The university also encourages student participation in projects of national and international sorts along with academic conferences, reinforcing its commitment to global education and scientific leadership.

A Unique Commitment to Halal Science

LHU stands out as a pioneering university in Halal studies, integrating scientia with moral and religious principles. The university is home to Türkiye’s mere Halal Product Application and Research Center, which focuses on Halal certification, food safety, pharmaceuticals, and biotechnology. The said center is actively engaged in research, training, and consultancy services, making LHU a world leader in Halal science.

The key initiatives and achievements within the scope of Halal research in this regard are given below:

International Halal Congress: This platform is organized annually, bringing together leading scholars, scientists, and industry professionals to exchange ideas towards prospective Halal



standards and innovative methods.

Halal Certification and Standardization: LHU is a recognized; accredited institution providing Halal Conformity Certificates, ensuring compliance with the highest international standards.

Halal Product Development Master's Program: The first and sole postgraduate program in Türkiye devoted to developing expertise in Halal food, medicine, and consumer goods.

Halal Research Collaborations: This points out to partnering with other universities and higher education institutions, certification bodies, as well as research organizations worldwide to drive Halal innovation and standardization.

Cutting-Edge Laboratories: These are equipped with advanced technology to conduct scientific validation of Halal products, pharmaceutical research, and carry out biotechnology studies.

Workshops and Seminars: These regular events hosted and actively participated in aim to educate professionals and students on Halal science, covering food safety, medical applications, and ethical considerations.

Integrating Halal Science with Health Education

LHU's commitment to Halal science extends beyond research into its core academic programs. The university warrants that its curriculum incorporates Islamic principles, particularly in medicine, pharmacy, nutrition, and biomedical sciences. The integration in question offers students a comprehensive understanding of Halal standards in healthcare, preparing them to contribute to real life and to meet the increasing demand for Halal-certified medical/health products and services.

LHU presents specialized coursework on Halal pharmaceuticals, food safety, and biomedicine, emphasizing that its students develop the necessary expertise to assess and validate products in accordance with the existing international Halal standards. Through a combination of theoretical education, laboratory research, and applied clinical experience, the university equips all its students with the knowledge and skills -wisdom- to innovate in Halal healthcare industries.

Additionally, the university is now operating Türkiye's second-largest medical simulation center, in which students gain hands-on experience in modern medical practices whilst adhering to Halal guidelines. This facility is equipped with high-tech simulators, virtual reality-based medical training modules, and interactive learning environments that make realistic clinical scenarios accessible. Via integrating Halal compliance measures into medical training, LHU italicizes that its graduates are fully prepared to navigate the possible ethical and regulatory considerations in healthcare sectors in and outside Türkiye.

To further its impact mentioned, LHU jointly works with global Halal regulatory bodies and certification agencies, offering students internship opportunities and direct industry engagement. These initiatives pinpoint that its graduates are not only well-versed in Halal science but also ready to be positioned as leaders in the future of Halal science.



A Global Vision for Halal Innovation

LHU actively fosters collaborations of international nature, working closely with governmental bodies, private sector partners, and other academic institutions within the country and worldwide to advance Halal research. Through strategic partnerships with renowned Halal certification bodies, research organizations, and regulatory institutions, LHU underpins that its contributions to Halal science remain at the cutting edge of local and global developments. The university also actively takes part in international symposiums, congresses and policy discussions to advocate for standardized Halal regulations and ethical medical practices. The university's Halal Life Community, a student-led initiative, further promotes stakeholder awareness and engagement in Halal science with the help of research projects, outreach programs, and cross-border student exchange programs. This community acts as a platform for younger researchers to gather targeting Halal-related studies, to get engaged with industry experts, and thence contribute to shaping the future of Halal healthcare and food industries. With over 400 international students from nearly 40 countries, LHU strives to construct a global network of scholars and professionals working for Halal science and ethical healthcare. The university's interest in establishing and sustaining global engagements implies, if not clearly states, that for all its students and faculty members international research grants, professional networking opportunities, and industry collaborations are made available, all of which carry the potential to boost the capacity of expertise in Halal-compliant medical and scientific advancements.

In a nutshell, as a research-driven university with a particular focus on Halal science, Lokman Hekim University is inspiring the areas of Halal-certified healthcare, food safety, and pharmaceutical research. Embracing scientific rigor, technological advancement, and ethical responsibility, LHU is not only conducting groundbreaking research but also setting the stage for the further development of novel Halal-compliant medical treatments, biotechnological innovations, and sustainable food solutions. Through academic excellence, innovative research, and strong industry collaborations, LHU is surely at the forefront of a rapidly evolving global movement that unites scientific advancement with ethical integrity. All the members of the university are actively working as part of national and international research consortia, policy-making initiatives, and global standardization efforts, highlighting that Halal science remains a key pillar of ethical/moral healthcare and consumer safety in Türkiye and worldwide. LHU also supports an ecosystem of innovative thinking by mentoring entrepreneurs, fostering start-ups in Halal biotechnology, and providing adequate funding for all the applied Halal research projects. With state-of-the-art research centers, strategic industry partnerships, and a dynamic academic environment, one can comfortably articulate that LHU offers an unparalleled opportunity for those looking to add onto the next generation of Halal medical and scientific advancements. For those who seek to be a part of these as Halal science leaders, Lokman Hekim University stands as the ideal academic home, not just for education, but as a transformative experience hub pioneering Halal science for a healthier and more ethical future.



INDUSTRIAL FOOD PROCESSING (FOOD ADDITIVES)

Prof. Fatih Gültekin
faith.gultekin@lokmanhekim.edu.tr
Lokman Hekim University, Ankara, Türkiye

Abstract

Food additives are substances added to foods during production, processing, packaging, transportation, and storage, either as a component of the food or to modify its properties. Before food additives are approved for use in food production, they undergo extensive toxicological research to determine whether they pose any health risks. Based on these studies, safe consumption levels are established to ensure they do not threaten human health. These levels are continuously monitored, and if unexpected adverse effects are observed, the permitted safe limits are revised downward, or the additive may be banned entirely.

Food additives generally appear to be safe when consumed within regulated limits and not in excessive amounts over prolonged periods. However, certain additives have been linked to triggering or exacerbating symptoms of allergies, migraines, inflammatory bowel diseases, gout, and hyperactivity. Additionally, some additives are associated with an increased risk of cancer.

Food additives can also influence the gut microbiota, and the negative effects of synthetic sweeteners, in particular, have been linked to a higher predisposition to diabetes and obesity.

Food additives are obtained from four main sources. Synthetic production, plant sources, microbial production and animal sources. Of these, animal sources are important elements that determine halalness in terms of the source from which the additives are obtained. In this article, possible negative effects of food additives on health and their animal sources in terms of halal status will be discussed.

Keywords: food additives, halal, source, nonhalal, istihālah, istihlāk

Introduction

Food additives are substances added to foods during the production process to enhance properties such as colour, taste, aroma, nutritional value, and shelf life. These substances are listed in the 'ingredients' section on food packaging labels.

Food additives have been a topic of concern for consumers since their widespread use began. This concern stems from two key characteristics of these additives: first, the potential health risks they may pose, and second, their sources, particularly animal-derived ingredients.

While the health implications of food additives are relevant to everyone, the sources of



these additives are of particular concern to certain groups. Some food additives are derived from plant or animal sources, while others are synthetically produced. Individuals who are sensitive to the origins of these additives often focus on animal-derived ingredients. This is primarily due to two reasons: first, animal-derived products are avoided by vegetarians and strict vegetarians (vegans) due to personal dietary choices, and second, some animal-derived ingredients may not be halal, raising concerns among those who adhere to Islamic dietary laws.

Islamic jurists, who determine whether food additives are halal, consider not only the potential harm of these substances but also their sources and the chemical transformations they undergo during production.

Before food additives are introduced to the market, they undergo extensive toxicological testing. These studies begin with laboratory experiments on cell cultures, followed by tests on laboratory animals, where high doses of the additives are administered. If any harmful effects are observed, the dosage is gradually reduced to determine a safe level that does not cause adverse effects. This safe dose is then used to calculate the acceptable daily intake (ADI) for humans, incorporating safety factors. Typically, the no-observed-adverse-effect level (NOAEL) in animals is divided by 100 to establish the safe consumption level for humans.

While food additives are generally considered safe when consumed in small amounts, they may still pose risks for certain diseases. Even at approved levels, there is evidence that some additives may contribute to or exacerbate conditions such as cancer, hyperactivity, allergies, skin problems, inflammatory bowel diseases, irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), certain inherited metabolic disorders, epilepsy, and migraines. Below, we will discuss some of the studies investigating the relationship between food additives and these conditions.

Cancer

Our diet and the foods we consume significantly influence cancer development. In modern lifestyles, food additives have become an integral part of our diet. While some additives are carcinogenic, others may enhance the activity of carcinogens. Additives known to be carcinogenic are not permitted in foods. If such effects are discovered after approval, the additives are banned. For example, synthetic additives like dulcin, cinnamyl anthranilate, and thiourea were found to cause liver cancer in experimental studies, leading to their prohibition in food products.¹⁻³ Among the currently permitted additives, sodium nitrite (E250) and potassium nitrite (E249), used as antibacterial agents and colour fixatives in processed meats like sausages, have been linked to an increased risk of cancer. Consuming 50 grams of processed meat daily raises the risk of colorectal cancer by 21%.⁴

Hyperactivity

Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a neurobiological condition characterized by an inability to focus or sustain attention appropriately and hyperactivity, affecting all aspects of a child's life.⁵ The exact causes of



ADHD are not fully understood, but genetic and environmental factors are believed to play a role.⁶ The potential role of food and food additives in triggering or exacerbating hyperactivity has been debated for many years.⁷ While some studies claim that additives do not cause hyperactivity, others suggest they may have adverse effects.⁸⁻¹⁰

Epilepsy

In addition to known causes of epilepsy, the relationship between dietary factors and epilepsy has been investigated. Studies in rats have shown that breakdown products of aspartame (E951) can increase seizure activity when they reach certain levels in the blood, and monosodium glutamate (E621) can trigger seizures when injected into the abdominal cavity.¹¹ Although no direct link between food additives and epilepsy has been established, the potential connection between the consumption of certain additives and seizures in unexplained epilepsy cases warrants consideration.

Migraine

The exact cause of migraines remains unclear. Numerous studies suggest that certain foods can trigger or worsen migraines. Some research indicates that a diet free of additives and based on simple foods reduces headaches in many children with migraines.¹² Cases have been reported where additives like aspartame triggered migraines.¹³

Allergies and Skin Problems

Many studies have investigated the allergenic effects of food additives. For example, some additives have been linked to a range of allergic reactions, from eczema to anaphylactic shock.¹⁴

Inflammatory Bowel Diseases (IBD)

The most well-known conditions in this group are ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease.

While genetic, immune, and environmental factors play a role in their development, the exact causes remain unknown. Some evidence suggests that additives like carrageenan (E407) and sulfites may contribute to the onset or exacerbation of ulcerative colitis.¹⁵ In Crohn's disease, microparticles from food, primarily composed of food additives such as titanium dioxide (E171) and silicates, are thought to play a significant role.¹⁶

Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS)

Irritable bowel syndrome, also known as spastic colon, is a functional bowel disorder characterized by abdominal pain, bloating, and alternating diarrhea and constipation. Symptoms are often related to dietary intake. In a survey of 330 IBS patients, nearly two-thirds associated their symptoms with food consumption.¹⁷ Certain carbohydrates, such as fructose, are poorly absorbed in the small intestine and can ferment in the colon, leading to gas production and exacerbating symptoms in IBS patients.¹⁸



Microbiota

The gut microbiota plays a crucial role in maintaining overall health and regulating various physiological processes. Synthetic sweeteners have been shown to alter gut microbiota composition, leading to increased glucose intolerance.”¹⁹

Sources of food additives

There are four sources from which additives are obtained. Synthetic production, plant sources, microbial production and animal sources. For example, aspartame is a synthetically produced sweetener.²⁰ Carrageenan is obtained from algae, a vegetable source.²¹ Various microorganisms are used for production by fermentation. For example, *Zygosaccharomyces rouxii* microorganisms are preferred in the production of “mannitol produced by fermentation.”²² Since animal sources are important in terms of halalness, these will be discussed in detail in this article.

Istihālāh and Istihlāk

Some animal resources that are not permissible to consume may become permissible by undergoing some chemical change. However, it should be noted that since everything about pork is impure, it cannot be used as a raw material in the production of food additives. Some food additives are added to foods in very small amounts. Therefore, it is useful to evaluate it in terms of istihlāk (inclusion or mixing of substances into foods in a very small amount (trace amount). Evaluation of food additives in terms of istihālāh has been discussed in detail in our previous article.²³

Animal Sources from Which Food Additives Are Obtained

It is possible to group the animal sources from which food additives are obtained and the additives produced into two groups:

First Group: The animal sources whose content is accurately known:

In this group, the sources and the additives obtained are:

Honeycombs: Wax is obtained.

Dactylopius coccus Costa, an insect species: Carminic acid is obtained.

Lactose which is milk sugar: Lactitol is obtained.

The white of chicken egg: Lysozyme is obtained.

The secretion of *Laccifer lacca*, an insect species: Shellac is obtained.

Although there are some discussions in the literature, it is stated by many fiqh researchers that there is no legal (fiqhi) problem in the consumption of additives in this group.

Second Group: The animal sources whose content is not accurately known:

The Animal sources in this group are as follows: Pig, cattle and sheep, poultry and fish. The



tissues of these animals such as meat, bone, skin, fat and blood, and their hair can be used in the production of some additives.

These additives, which can be obtained from animal sources, can be grouped as follows. The additives in this group can be obtained from plant sources as well as from animal sources. Some of them may also be synthetically produced by microbial biotechnology (fermentation) or by synthesis.

Food Additives from Animal Sources:

Considering the production processes of animal-based additives, they can be evaluated in two groups.

A. Those obtained by the breakdown of large molecules

B. Those of the breakdown products used in the synthesis of other molecules.

Istihālah as a term of Islamic law (fiqh), is the cleanliness of a dirty (najis) substance by changing its structure. In other words, it is the transformation of a substance from haram to halal through the change in its chemical structure. This may not always be the case. In some cases, it has been accepted that haram substances become halal after being processed with istihālah. Today, this issue comes up with food additives mostly obtained from animal sources

Resources of the food and the physical and chemical changing process in the production process determine their rulings in Islamic law. The substances obtained from non halal (unlawful) sources may be considered halal (lawful) with the chemical changes that was undergone during the production is called istihālah. Physical changes do not cause to istihālah. According to this, the following results below were obtained: Every part of the swine is not allowed to use as a raw material in the production of food additives whether it was undergone to istihālah or not. Because everything belong to swine is accepted dirty (najis). Chemically, triglycerides are undergone istihālah if they are breakdown to glycerol and fatty acids. Proteins are undergone istihālah if they are totally breakdown to their amino acids. When glycerol, fatty acids and amino acids generated from these breakdowns are used to produce new substances, the new products are accepted as undergone to istihālah. Monoglycerides, diglycerides, phospholipids, nucleotides, gelatins and phosphatidic acids as metabolites are not accepted as undergone to istihālah.

Because they are not hydrolyzed to their subunits, so they do not lose their features. If these compounds are combined with new additives, the new component also are not accepted as undergone to istihālah.

Istihlāk is the loss of basic properties of a small amount of substance by mixing with a large amount of other matter. Istihlāk has not gained a term meaning in the classical literature, it has been the subject of different interpretations in contemporary studies. The real function of istihlāk emerges when a small amount of najis and haram substances added to a large amount of halal and clean substances are mixed in such a way that they lose their color, smell, and taste. To stipulate that the dissolution and destruction occurring in this mixture will transform it into another substance would be to reduce the istihlāk to the term istihālah.



Therefore, according to istihlāk, a small amount of najis does not prevent the halalness of a large amount of material after it is dissolved by losing its color, taste, and smell. It does not matter if a few substances persist after dissolution. As a matter of fact, the operation of this rule in yeast and soft drinks is a dependent situation. Consumption rule is applied in the issue of using ethyl alcohol as a solvent in the production of soft drinks. In fact, the debate takes place over the impurity (najis) of alcohol. In our opinion, the najis provision in the classical Hanafi literature is a special (taabbudi) provision only for wine type drinks called hamr. Alcohol has been decomposed as a pure substance in recent centuries. Therefore, it would not be appropriate to include it in the scope of hamr in classical works. It is possible to see alcoholic beverages other than hamr / wine type in this class. It is haram to drink them, but it is permissible to use them in areas such as cleaning and medicine. For example, the permissibility of using cologne, which has become widespread in the last century, is based on the idea that alcohol is not najis.²⁴

Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be said that food additives generally appear to be safe when not consumed excessively or continuously. However, as summarized above, even though some of the currently used additives have undergone toxicological testing and are deemed safe at permitted levels based on scientific research, they may still play a role in the development or exacerbation of certain diseases. Some food additives are obtained from animal sources, and they may not be permissible to consume, depending on the animal source from which they are obtained. Therefore, additives in this group should be carefully examined in terms of halal certification.

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THE CONCEPT OF HALAL LIFE

Dr. Medet Coşkun

Presidency of Religious Affairs, Supreme Council of Religious Affairs

Abstract This paper explores the comprehensive and multidimensional concept of “Halal Life” in Islamic teachings. Halal, meaning lawful or permissible, transcends dietary laws and encompasses the entirety of a Muslim’s existence. This includes ethical earnings, lawful consumption, social conduct, environmental consciousness, and spiritual integrity. Drawing from scriptural sources and scholarly interpretations, this paper aims to present halal living as a holistic lifestyle that fosters individual wellbeing and societal harmony.

1. **Introduction** The term “halal” in Arabic means what is permitted and lawful in Islam. It stands in opposition to “haram,” which denotes what is prohibited. However, halal is not limited to food; it is a comprehensive concept that governs a Muslim’s actions, behavior, consumption, and beliefs. As emphasized in the Qur’an: “O mankind, eat from whatever is on earth [that is] lawful and good and do not follow the footsteps of Satan. Indeed, he is to you a clear enemy.” (Qur’an 2:168). This verse indicates the importance of awareness and discernment in consumption and conduct.
2. **Historical and Scriptural Foundations** Islamic scriptures highlight the significance of halal and tayyib (pure) consumption. From the story of Adam and Eve to Prophet Muhammad’s hadiths, the message is consistent: what we consume affects our spirituality and ethics. Numerous verses in the Qur’an urge believers to avoid doubtful matters, emphasizing the centrality of a clean and conscious life. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) stated, “Indeed, Allah is pure and accepts only that which is pure” (Muslim, Zakat 65). Such teachings form the theological backbone of halal living.

3. Key Components of Halal Life

3.1 Halal Earnings Economic activities are integral to halal life. A Muslim is expected to earn a livelihood through honest means. The Prophet emphasized that the best food is what one earns through lawful labor. Prohibited means such as usury (riba), deception, and exploitation are condemned. Islamic business ethics promote fairness, transparency, and mutual consent in all transactions.

3.2 Halal Food The dietary laws in Islam are precise. Halal food must be free from prohibited elements such as pork and alcohol. Animals must be slaughtered in the name of Allah and in a specific manner. The concept of tayyib reinforces the idea that food should also be clean, healthy, and ethically sourced. Today, with the proliferation of processed foods and additives, halal certification has become a vital tool for Muslim consumers.

3.3 Halal Tourism and Lifestyle Muslims are encouraged to maintain halal standards even during travel and leisure. Halal tourism offers environments that respect Islamic values:



alcohol-free zones, prayer facilities, and gender-segregated amenities. This reflects the belief that spirituality should not be compartmentalized but practiced consistently.

4. **Socio-Economic and Environmental Dimensions** Halal living also emphasizes social justice and environmental sustainability. Islam prohibits wastefulness (israf) and encourages responsible stewardship of resources. The Prophet Muhammad warned against extravagance even in the use of water during ablution. Environmentally, halal products should avoid harmful chemicals, unethical labor practices, and animal cruelty. Economically, the halal market represents a significant global industry. With over 1.9 billion Muslims, the demand for halal products spans food, cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, and finance. The halal industry not only caters to religious needs but also promotes ethical consumerism.
5. **Educational and Cultural Significance** Halal consciousness should be instilled from an early age. Educational initiatives, including halal studies in universities and community programs, are essential. Cultural practices around food and social interaction also reflect halal values. As globalization increases cultural exchange, halal practices can serve as a bridge for interfaith dialogue and mutual respect.
6. **Contemporary Challenges and Scholarly Responses** In today's complex world, distinguishing between halal and haram can be challenging. Industrial food production, cross-contamination, and deceptive labeling require vigilance. While halal certification provides assurance, scholars emphasize that the core issue is compliance with Islamic principles, not just the presence of a label. Issues like consuming food in mixed restaurants or accepting food from non-Muslims are addressed with nuance, focusing on intention, necessity, and available alternatives.
7. **Conclusion** Halal life is more than a set of rules; it is a philosophy that nurtures the soul, protects the body, and sustains the earth. It promotes integrity, justice, and community welfare. By adhering to halal principles, Muslims not only fulfill religious obligations but also contribute to a more ethical and sustainable world. As such, halal life is a path to divine pleasure and societal peace.



TOURISM AND ETHICS IN HALAL PRODUCTION

Dr. Ahmad Alzaree
Global Halal Foundation
alzareeahmed@yahoo.com

Abstract

This paper explores the ethical dimensions of halal production with a special focus on the growing field of halal tourism. Halal production, encompassing food, cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, finance, and hospitality, must align with both Islamic religious principles and global ethical standards. This includes transparency, fair labor practices, sustainability, and cultural sensitivity. As halal tourism becomes a rapidly growing sector, it brings both opportunities and challenges in maintaining ethical integrity and religious compliance.

1. Introduction to the Halal Industry: The halal industry represents a significant segment of the global economy, catering to the needs of over 1.9 billion Muslims. It spans various sectors including food, healthcare, cosmetics, and increasingly, travel and hospitality. Ethics in this domain are crucial to ensure the trust of consumers, the integrity of Islamic principles, and the sustainability of the industry. The foundation of halal ethics lies in adherence to permissible (halal) and avoidance of forbidden (haram), while integrating fairness (adl), kindness (ihsan), and transparency (amanah).

2. Core Ethical Principles in Halal Production: Ethical halal production is grounded in several principles:

- Permissibility (Halal) & Prohibition (Haram): All products and services must comply with Islamic legal rulings.
- Fairness & Justice (Adl & Ihsan): Ensuring fair wages, ethical pricing, and preventing exploitation.
- Transparency & Integrity (Amanah): Accurate labeling, clear information about ingredients and processes.
- Animal Welfare: Ethical treatment, humane slaughter methods, and proper living conditions.

3. Ethical Challenges in Halal Production: Despite its religious roots, the halal industry faces ethical concerns:

- Fraud and Mislabeling: Unverified or fake halal certifications.
- Lack of Global Standards: Inconsistencies in halal guidelines across countries.
- Labor Exploitation: Poor wages and working conditions in halal supply chains.
- Environmental Sustainability: Overconsumption of resources and neglect of eco-friendly practices.

4. Halal Tourism: An Ethical Perspective Halal tourism involves providing travel experiences that accommodate the religious needs of Muslim travelers. This includes halal-certified meals, alcohol-free environments, prayer facilities, and gender-sensitive amenities. Ethical



halal tourism requires:

- **Genuine Services:** Authentic adherence to Islamic values, avoiding superficial labeling.
- **Fair Labor Practices:** Ensuring just treatment of hospitality staff.
- **Sustainability:** Promoting eco-conscious travel and minimizing waste.
- **Affordable Services:** Avoiding price inflation due to “halal” branding.

5. **Economic and Cultural Impact of Halal Tourism:** Halal tourism contributes significantly to local and national economies by attracting Muslim travelers. It drives investment in halal-compliant infrastructure and opens new markets for Islamic finance. Moreover, it fosters intercultural understanding as non-Muslim destinations increasingly adopt Muslim-friendly services.

6. **Environmental and Social Benefits** Halal tourism aligns with the Islamic concept of stewardship (khalifah), promoting respectful interaction with nature. It encourages eco-friendly accommodation, ethical animal treatment, and supports the global movement toward sustainable tourism. Socially, it empowers Muslims to engage in global travel without compromising their values.

7. **Future Directions and Recommendations** The future of halal tourism depends on:

- **Standardization:** Establishing universal halal certification standards.
- **Education:** Informing consumers and providers about ethical requirements.
- **Innovation:** Developing inclusive and sustainable travel models.
- **Collaboration:** Engaging stakeholders across religious and cultural lines.

Conclusion

Ethics in halal production and tourism are not merely about religious compliance but about creating a just, inclusive, and sustainable global community. As the halal industry grows, it must embrace transparency, social responsibility, and environmental stewardship to truly reflect the spirit of Islamic ethics.



A FIQHI ANALYSIS OF THE CONCEPTS OF HALAL AND ZABIHA: An Evaluation in Light of Questions Directed to the Diyanet Center of America

Assoc. Prof. Fatih Kanca
Chairman of the Diyanet center of America
fkanca@diyanetamerica.org

Abstract

This study examines the two frequently discussed concepts in Islamic law regarding food consumption: “halal” and “zabiha.” The differences between the concepts are analyzed in the light of fiqhi evidences, and the impact of these differences on the daily lives of Muslim communities in various countries is discussed. The text is specifically written in the context of questions submitted by Muslims living in the United States to the Diyanet Center of America.

Introduction

The terms halal and zabiha hold a central place in the Islamic rulings related to food. These concepts gain even more practical significance among Muslim communities living in the West. One of the questions submitted to the Diyanet Center of America reads as follows: “Many people say eating non-zabiha meat is haram, while many others say it is halal. Why is there a difference of opinion among scholars? Pakistani scholars say it is not permissible, while many Arab scholars say it is. So is it permissible to eat at fast food restaurants like McDonald’s, Burger King, Whataburger?” These and similar questions necessitate a closer examination of the concepts of halal and zabiha.¹

Definition and Scope of the Concept of Halal

Halal, an Arabic term, means “permissible,” referring to acts that are religiously allowed. It can be applied broadly to areas such as food, clothing, income, and social behavior. Based on evidence from the Qur’an and Sunnah, what is halal and haram has been determined. In terms of food, aside from explicitly prohibited items like pork and alcohol, most food is considered halal. However, the source of ingredients like additives, enzymes, and gelatin is decisive in determining halal status.

Definition of the Concept of Zabiha and Its Fiqhi Conditions

Zabiha pertains specifically to the method of obtaining animal products. For meat to be considered zabiha, the following conditions must be met: the slaughter must be performed by a sane, adult Muslim; the name of Allah (basmala) must be mentioned during the slaughter; the esophagus, windpipe, and the two arteries must be severed in one swift motion; and the blood must be fully drained. Islamic slaughter is not just a technical procedure, but also

¹“Difference Between Zabihah And Non-zabihah | AMJA Online”; Abdallah, “The Difference Between Halal and Zabiha”.

²“Difference Between Zabihah And Non-zabihah | AMJA Online”; Abdallah, “The Difference Between Halal and Zabiha”.



a humane approach that minimizes the animal's suffering.²

Conceptual Differences

Although the terms halal and zabiha are sometimes used interchangeably, there is a clear fiqhi distinction between them. Zabiha refers to the method of slaughtering meat, whereas halal more generally denotes what is permissible under Islamic law. Thus, zabiha can be considered a subcategory within halal.³

Differences in Fiqhi Opinions and Sectarian Interpretations

There are differing scholarly interpretations regarding the consumption of non-zabiha meat. Some fiqhi views consider the mention of basmala during slaughter to be obligatory, while others deem it recommended or encouraged. Particularly, Qur'anic verses about animals slaughtered by the People of the Book (Ahl al-Kitab) have led to varied interpretations. These differences stem from the differing legal reasoning (ijtihad) within Islamic legal schools. In the United States, Muslims often observe these differences between Arab and Pakistani scholars, which in turn influence their dietary choices.⁴

Modern Context of Fast Food Restaurants

The permissibility of eating at Western fast food restaurants depends on whether the meat served meets Islamic slaughtering conditions. Moreover, factors such as cross-contamination with pork products or shared cooking equipment also affect the halal assessment. In such cases of doubt, the safest approach is to abstain. As noted in one of the questions submitted to the Diyanet Center of America: "My mother and I have been discussing this issue for a long time, and we want to clarify it. When someone asks me, I want to be able to explain in detail where the difference comes from." These questions show that the issue is not just theoretical but also vital to the everyday lives of Muslims in America.⁵

Conclusion

The concepts of halal and zabiha are two significant fiqhi terms that Muslims must consider both theoretically and practically in their dietary consumption. Understanding the differences between these concepts is essential for making conscious and Shari'ah-compliant dietary choices. Questions submitted to institutions like the Diyanet Center of America help bring these fiqhi matters into public awareness and contribute to the development of informed individuals.

³ "Difference Between Zabihah And Non-zabihah | AMJA Online"; Abdallah, "The Difference Between Halal and Zabiha".

⁴ "Difference Between Zabihah And Non-zabihah | AMJA Online"; Abdallah, "The Difference Between Halal and Zabiha".

⁵ "Difference Between Zabihah And Non-zabihah | AMJA Online"; Abdallah, "The Difference Between Halal and Zabiha".



FOOD ADDITIVES AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS IN THE FOOD INDUSTRY

Dr. Mian Riaz
m.riaz@ifanca.org

Abstract

Food additives play a significant role in the modern food industry, impacting food preservation, safety, and sensory properties. This paper discusses the classification, functions, and regulatory concerns of food additives with a focus on consumer safety and technological advancements.

Introduction

The use of food additives has become indispensable in food manufacturing. These substances enhance shelf life, improve appearance and flavor, and ensure consistency. However, their usage also raises concerns about health implications and regulatory standards.

Classification of Food Additives

Food additives are broadly categorized into the following groups based on their function:

- Preservatives: Prevent spoilage caused by microorganisms.
- Antioxidants: Prevent oxidation of fats and oils.
- Colorants: Restore color lost during processing or enhance appearance.
- Flavor Enhancers: Improve taste and palatability.
- Emulsifiers and Stabilizers: Maintain consistency and texture.
- Acidity Regulators: Control pH levels in foods.

Regulations and Safety

In the United States, the FDA oversees the regulation of food additives. Each additive must undergo scientific evaluation to ensure safety before approval. The concept of "Generally Recognized As Safe" (GRAS) is key in this context. However, global differences in additive approval and acceptable daily intake (ADI) values complicate international food trade and consumer understanding.

Controversies and Challenges

While additives offer technological benefits, controversies persist, particularly regarding synthetic chemicals and their long-term health effects. Mislabeling, overuse, and lack of consumer awareness are persistent issues that need to be addressed through stringent policy enforcement and education.



Technological Advancements

Innovations in food science have led to the development of natural and functional additives that offer health benefits. The demand for clean-label products is pushing the industry towards transparency and safer alternatives.

Conclusion

Food additives are essential to the modern food supply chain, but their usage must be balanced with safety and consumer trust. Harmonizing regulations and increasing transparency will be vital in addressing public concerns and ensuring the responsible use of food additives globally.



DIFFICULTIES IN HALAL CERTIFICATION PROCESSES AND SOLUTIONS

Dr. Mian Riaz
m.riaz@ifanca.org

Abstract

Halal certification is a practice of growing importance in both religious and commercial contexts. This paper examines the key challenges faced in the halal certification process, focusing on transparency, standardization, and reliability.

Introduction

The halal food sector is expanding rapidly on a global scale. Despite this growth, the halal certification process involves various complexities and difficulties, leading to trust issues for both consumers and producers.

Main Challenges in Halal Certification

1. Lack of Standardization: Definitions and practices of halal vary across countries and organizations, posing a significant barrier to international trade.
2. Authority Conflicts: There are major differences in the credibility and authority of certifying bodies. Some are nationally recognized, while others are valid only locally or within certain sectors.
3. Transparency Issues: The details of certification processes are often not disclosed to the public, undermining consumer trust.
4. Cost and Duration: Obtaining a halal certificate can be lengthy and expensive, particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises.
5. Consumer Trust: The above factors negatively impact consumer confidence in halal labels.

Recommendations

- Implementation of international halal standards,
- Regulation and transparency of certifying bodies,
- Digital monitoring of certification processes,
- Increasing consumer awareness through education and outreach.

Conclusion

The challenges in halal certification are not only technical but also socio-cultural and economic. Overcoming these challenges will enhance the credibility of the halal food sector and enable it to play a more active role in international trade.



HALAL FOOD AMONG DIASPORA MUSLIMS: An Alternative Perspective from the Ahmadiyya Community

Assoc. Prof. Halide Rumeysa Küçüköner
hkucukon@gmu.edu
rumeysah@hotmail.com
George Mason University, USA
Dicle University, Turkey

Abstract

The consumption of halal food constitutes a fundamental aspect of Islamic dietary rules. The implementation of modern meat processing methods has given rise to significant debates on this issue. This paper examines the Ahmadi perspective on halal food, particularly in the context of modern meat processing techniques employed in Western countries. The study explores the theological underpinnings of the halal issue from the Ahmadi perspective, their interpretations regarding industrial slaughtering methods, and the significance of halal certification for Ahmadis. The contemporary Ahmadi leadership's approach, particularly concerning the concepts of halal and tayyib, is also discussed.

Introduction

Islamic⁶ dietary regulations are based on information provided in the Quran and Hadith, which define what is halal ("permissible") and haram ("forbidden"). However, like other Muslims residing in non-Muslim countries, particularly in the United States, Ahmadis frequently engage in discourse on the subject of what is halal and what is haram. This discourse is especially focused on the issue of meat consumption. This issue has assumed added significance in Western countries with the progression of modern industrial food production, giving rise to concerns regarding the authenticity of halal slaughter. As a community with perhaps the longest history of the Western diaspora, Ahmadis have sought to address this issue with a broader perspective, adopting a more "moderate" approach to finding solutions.

Theological Arguments of Ahmadis Regarding the Foundations of Halal and Haram Foods

Ahmadis assert that the issue of halal and haram foods is explained in greater detail in the Quran compared to previous sacred scriptures. They emphasize that determining whether a food is halal can be easily derived from the Quran. Specifically, they argue that there is no ambiguity regarding which meats are permissible and which are prohibited. In this regard, they refer to Maide⁷ 173⁸ and An'am 145 as key references. They state that Baqarah 173 provides the fundamental guidelines, while An'am 145⁹ further clarifies these details.¹⁰

⁶ The data in this study were obtained as a result of research conducted at George Mason University, USA, within the scope of the TÜBİTAK 2219 International Research Fellowship and the project numbered 1059B192202209. I am grateful to TÜBİTAK for its support of my project.



Accordingly, Ahmadis identify four categories of prohibited meats in the Quran:

1. The meat of animals that have died before being slaughtered (carrion) – including animals that have died due to a blow, goring, or any other cause, as mentioned in Maida 3¹¹
2. The blood that flows when an animal is slaughtered or wounded.
3. Pork or any pork-derived products.
4. Animals sacrificed in the name of any deity other than Allah.

Ahmadis posit that the first three are prohibited on the grounds of their impurity and the potential for physical and spiritual harm to humans. The fourth category is interpreted as a spiritual and moral harm associated with the consumption of food that has been sacrificed in the name of other deities. It is emphasised that, in addition to the explicitly prohibited categories mentioned in the Quran, all other foods are permissible.¹²

Halal Certification Debate

The necessity of halal certification is a matter that is the subject of much debate in today's society. While a considerable number of Muslims are of the conviction that a food product must be accompanied by a halal certification, Ahmadis emphasise that this is not an absolute requirement. Instead, they contend that the fundamental concern should be whether the food meets the criteria permitted by the Quran and adheres to the essential conditions. In this regard, Ahmadis contend that the absence of a halal certification label or the fact

⁷Ahmadis consider Bismillah as a verse, which results in their sources numbering Quranic verses one count ahead compared to standard numbering. However, even though we have referenced ayah translations from Ahmadi sources, we have presented the verse numbers according to the generally accepted numbering in the original Quran.

⁸"He has made unlawful to you only that which dies of itself, and blood and the flesh of swine, and that on which the name of any other than Allah has been invoked. But he who is driven by necessity, being neither disobedient nor exceeding the limit, it shall be no sin for him. Surely, Allah is Most Forgiving, Merciful." Quran 2:173. The translations of the verses have been directly taken from Ahmadi source.

⁹"Say, 'I do not find in what has been revealed to me anything forbidden to an eater who desires to eat, except that which dies of itself, or blood poured forth, or the flesh of swine — for all that is unclean — or what is profane, on which is invoked the name of other than Allah...' Quran 6:146. The translations of the verses have been directly taken from Ahmadi source.

¹⁰"Meat & Myth"; Hakam, "Understanding Halal Slaughter"; "What Can a Muslim Eat?"

¹¹"Forbidden to you is the flesh of an animal which dies of itself, and blood and the flesh of swine; and that on which is invoked the name of one other than Allah; and that which has been strangled; and that beaten to death; and that killed by a fall; and that which has been gored to death; and that of which a wild animal has eaten, except that which you have properly slaughtered; and that which has been slaughtered at an altar. And forbidden is also that you seek to know your lot by the divining arrows. That is an act of disobedience. This day have those who disbelieve despaired of harming your religion. So fear them not, but fear Me. This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favour upon you and have chosen for you Islam as religion. But whoso is forced by hunger, without being wilfully inclined to sin, then, surely, Allah is Most Forgiving, Merciful." Quran 5:3 The translations of the verse have been directly taken from Ahmadi source.

¹²"Meat & Myth"; Hakam, "Understanding Halal Slaughter"; "What Can a Muslim Eat?"



that a product does not originate from a halal butcher does not inherently render it haram. This perspective is particularly aimed at providing ease for Ahmadis living in the West. To support this argument, they cite a narration attributed to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), in which his companions expressed uncertainty about whether the name of Allah had been invoked during the slaughter of an animal. The Prophet's response, as recorded, was to advise his companions to say Bismillah (in the name of Allah) and to eat the meat. This tradition is interpreted by Ahmadis to imply that the absence of halal certification does not inherently render food haram.¹³

Ahmadis' Perspective on the Meat Slaughtered by the People of the Book

Whilst some Ahmadis contend that halal slaughter is not an obligatory practice, but rather a Sunnah and tradition of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), the Ahmadi leadership advises caution when purchasing meat in Western countries. They advocate the procurement of meat from reputable butchers who adhere to Islamic slaughtering methods wherever practicable.

Ahmadis further posit that the consumption of meat slaughtered by Jews and Christians (People of the Book) is permissible, contingent upon the adherence to Islamic principles in the slaughtering method. The Ahmadi leadership acknowledges that Jewish slaughtering methods generally align with Islamic guidelines. However, they also acknowledge that the practices of Christian or atheist slaughterhouses may vary and that some may not comply with Islamic regulations. In such cases, they believe that reciting the phrase "Bismillah" at the point of consumption resolves any concerns regarding its permissibility.

Modern Slaughtering Methods and Ahmadis' Perspectives

The Ahmadiyya Muslim community has established specific principles regarding the compliance of industrial slaughtering methods with Islamic guidelines, particularly in Western countries. In these regions, industrial slaughtering frequently involves the stunning of animals prior to slaughter. The leadership of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community has provided a response to the question of the acceptability of these methods as follows:

1. In the event of an animal perishing as a consequence of gas stunning or submersion in boiling water prior to slaughter, the meat is deemed haram.
2. Conversely, if an animal is rendered unconscious but remains alive at the time of slaughter and is properly cut at the throat, its meat is considered halal.
3. However, if the slaughtering process deviates from Islamic guidelines, such as being carried out by cutting from the back of the neck, it is not permissible.

Concerns may arise in relation to large slaughterhouses where animals are slaughtered in the presence of other animals, or where their bones may break after being hung. However,

¹³Hakam, "Understanding Halal Slaughter"; "Meat & Myth"; "What Can a Muslim Eat?"



Ahmadis contend that if the slaughtering process adheres to Islamic principles, these factors do not render the meat haram. They emphasise the importance of avoiding unnecessary doubt and suspicion, and they advise that saying Bismillah before consuming meat ensures its permissibility.

Halal and Tayyib: Ethical Considerations

The Ahmadis incorporate the concept of tayyib into the discourse surrounding the subject of halal food. Citing Baqarah 168, they underscore the distinction Islam delineates between halal (permissible) and tayyib (pure and wholesome). They contend that while a food may satisfy the technical criteria for being halal, it does not necessarily imply that it is tayyib.

To illustrate this point, they cite the example of industrial meat production, which involves the use of hormones, antibiotics, and unethical animal farming practices. While this may be considered halal, it is not necessarily tayyib. Consequently, they emphasise that the mere adherence to halal principles does not ensure that a food is in accordance with the ethical and health-related standards of Islam. Ahmadis advocate for Muslims to consume food that is both halal and tayyib, ensuring the preservation of both their physical and spiritual well-being.¹⁵

Conclusion

The Ahmadiyya approach to halal food has been developed with a particular focus on Ahmadis living in the diaspora, especially in the West. Within their theological framework, they seek to strike a balance between religious obligations and practical living solutions. Ahmadis contend that Muslims should consider the four fundamental criteria outlined in the Quran when determining the halal status of meat: the prohibition of consuming animals that have died before slaughter, the prohibition of consuming blood that flows from an animal when it is slaughtered or wounded, the prohibition of pork and pork-based products, and the prohibition of consuming animals that have been slaughtered in the name of any deity other than Allah. They contend that, apart from these prohibitions, any permissible meat can be consumed, provided that Bismillah is recited prior to consumption.

Ahmadis adopt a moderate Islamic perspective that emphasises the concept of halal rather than haram. They emphasise the concept of tayyib, interpreting it as the fundamental concern in Islam – the protection of both physical and spiritual health. In this regard, it is noteworthy that Ahmadis adopt a more rationalist approach to the issues of halal and tayyib, aligning with Western values.¹⁶

¹⁴“O ye men! eat of what is lawful (Halal) and good (Tayyib) in the earth; and follow not the footsteps of Satan; surely, he is to you an open enemy.” Quran 2:168

¹⁵“Meat & Myth”; “What Can a Muslim Eat?”

¹⁶“What Can a Muslim Eat?”



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THE RISING DEMAND FOR HALAL FOOD

Habib D. Ghanim
President USA Halal Chamber of Commerce, Inc.
DBA ISWA Halal Certification Department
Executive World Halal Council

Summary:

Rising Demand for Halal Food: The halal food industry in North America is booming due to increasing demand from immigrants seeking halal products.

Certification Challenges: Halal certification requires food to meet specific Islamic guidelines. However, investigations revealed many popular fast-food chains like KFC, Popeyes, and Boston Pizza couldn't provide clear answers about their halal status or displayed misleading certificates meant for suppliers, not restaurants.

Inconsistent Standards: There are multiple certifying bodies in United States with no standardized regulations, leading to confusion over what qualifies as halal. Differences include whether meat is hand- or machine-slaughtered, which isn't always specified on certificates.

Expired and Misleading Certificates: Several restaurants displayed expired or irrelevant certificates. Some falsely claimed certification from organizations like the Halal Monitoring Authority (HMA), which had no affiliation with them.

Regulatory Gaps: The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) requires halal products to be certified but doesn't regulate who can be a certifier, leaving gaps in enforcement.

Comparison with New Jersey: In contrast, New Jersey enforces halal transparency laws, requiring businesses to post disclosure forms detailing halal practices, offering clarity and peace of mind to consumers.

Calls for Reform: Experts and consumers in the United States advocate for government-regulated certification standards, periodic audits, and improved staff training in restaurants to ensure accuracy.

The Growing Halal Industry in North America

Halal food is increasingly popular in Canada and USA, the example studies conducted in this paper are from both countries. This demand is driven by a growing immigrant population seeking halal-certified products. At a halal expo near Toronto, a variety of halal goods—including meat, baked goods, and spices—highlight the market's expansion. (Marketplace, 2024).



Understanding Halal Certification

For meat to be considered halal the basic standards are below:

- The animal must be healthy and treated humanely before slaughter.
- A prayer must be recited at the time of slaughter.
- The slaughter should be performed by a Muslim using a swift, deep cut across the throat.
- Halal meat cannot come into contact with non-halal meat (e.g., pork).

However, there are international standards from Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia that are recognized worldwide. An example of those standards would be GSO 2703 2022- Gulf Standard Islamic and Halal principles - Definitions and interpretations on terminology and OIC/SMIIC 23: 2022 Feeding Stuffs for Halal Animals – General Requirements.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) requires halal-labeled products to be certified but does not regulate who can be a certifier, due to separation of Church and State.

Investigation into Fast Food Chains (These examples below are from Canada)

The investigation involved undercover visits to major fast-food chains, including KFC, Popeyes, Mary Brown's, Osmow's, and Boston Pizza, with a checklist:

- Is everything on the menu halal?
- Can restaurants provide valid halal certification?
- Is there any risk of cross-contamination?

Findings:

- Many restaurants could not confirm if their food was fully halal (Marketplace, 2024).
- Halal certificates were often misleading—many were meant for suppliers, not restaurants. Some certificates explicitly stated, "Not for restaurant's use" (Marketplace, 2024).
- Expired certificates were found in multiple locations, some dating back eight years (Marketplace, 2024).

At Popeyes, a location claimed to be halal-certified but showed a supplier's certificate rather than one for the restaurant. Imam Omar Subedar from the Halal Monitoring Authority (HMA) confirmed that many restaurants falsely display supplier certificates to mislead consumers (Marketplace, 2024).

Regulatory Gaps & Consumer Concerns

Despite CFIA and USDA's requirement that halal products be certified, Canada and the U.S lacks regulation on who can certify food as halal. With over a dozen different certifying agencies, there is no unified standard, leading to confusion.

One major discrepancy involves the slaughter method:

- Some certifiers accept machine-slaughtered meat as halal.



- Others only recognize hand-slaughtered (zabiha) halal. Because certificates do not specify the slaughter method, customers must ask, and many restaurant employees are unable to provide answers.

New Jersey's Halal Transparency Law

In contrast to Canada, New Jersey enforces halal transparency through the Halal Food Consumer Protection Act. Businesses must publicly disclose whether their food is halal and specify details such as slaughter methods (Marketplace, 2024).

Key elements of New Jersey's law:

- Halal disclosure forms must be displayed in restaurants.
- The state monitors and fines businesses that fail to comply.
- Customers can see clear and verifiable halal practices without needing to ask (Marketplace, 2024).

Halal advocates in Canada, including food bloggers Mohamed and Sarah Arfan, support implementing a similar system in Canada to eliminate confusion (Marketplace, 2024).

Challenges for Halal Businesses

A butcher shop owner in London, Ontario shared frustrations over certification costs. He was put on a "decertified" list after refusing to pay \$350 per month to a certifier, despite no changes in his meat sources. He called for government regulation of certifiers to ensure fairness and transparency (Marketplace, 2024).

Calls for Reform & Government Response

American Halal Council, Islamic Chamber of Commerce and consumers demand:

- Federal regulation of halal certifiers to enforce standard practices.
- Clearer labeling to specify slaughter methods (machine vs. hand-cut).
- Regular audits to verify compliance

The CFIA stated that certification responsibility lies with individual certifiers, not the government (Marketplace, 2024).

Meanwhile, some restaurant chains responded:

- Osmow's claimed all their products are hand-slaughtered halal and will verify certification (Marketplace, 2024).
- Mary Brown's pledged to educate employees on identifying halal ingredients (Marketplace, 2024).
- Boston Pizza stated that locations offering halal must complete online training (Marketplace, 2024).
- KFC & Popeyes did not respond (Marketplace, 2024).

Consumer Advice & Conclusion

Until Canada and the U.S adopts clearer regulations, consumers must:



- Ask for certificates and verify their validity.
- Check for outdated or misleading certifications.
- Do independent research before eating at a halal-claimed restaurant.

The investigation exposes major gaps in halal food regulation in Canada, highlighting the need for federal oversight and transparency to protect consumer trust and religious dietary practices.

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CONCLUSION



COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW

Reinforced that standardization and harmonization of halal certification is vital to removing trade barriers and consumer mistrust , especially in regions where there are multiple certification bodies and a lack of regulatory oversight . Furthermore, the role of academia is to ensure that scientific developments are compatible with religious and ethical principles , It was highlighted as a key component in strengthening research-based halal verification . it is clear that stakeholders across sectors—government officials, religious institutions, academic researchers, and industry leaders—must collaborate to develop sustainable, ethical, and widely accepted halal standards . The panel concluded with a call to action to improve consumer education, increase transparency in halal certification, and expand halal markets globally while preserving the integrity of Islamic dietary and ethical principles .

By encouraging innovation, regulatory harmonization and cross-border collaboration, the future of the halal ecosystem can be secured as a trusted, inclusive and ethically sound global standard .

Towards a United Halal Ecosystem: Key Insights from the Halal Living Panel the Halal Life Panel 2025 , industry experts, religious scholars, academics and key stakeholders came together to address challenges in the global halal ecosystem. They agreed on the following key priorities and actionable recommendations:

1. Establishment of a Unified Global Halal Standard

- Strengthen international cooperation to establish a globally recognized halal certification system.
- Address fragmentation in halal certification that creates confusion and mistrust among consumers and businesses.
- To promote the adoption of the SMIIC halal certification framework in Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) countries and other countries.
- Strengthen the collaboration between the Religious Affairs Center of America (DCA), Lokman Hekim University, IFANCA and the US Halal Chamber of Commerce and continue to organize events related to halal lifestyle.
- Promoting the IFHAB Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MRA) to harmonize halal certification and remove trade barriers .
- Promote stronger collaboration between regulatory bodies, research institutions and industry stakeholders to increase confidence in halal certification.

2. The Role of the Academy in Strengthening Halal Certification

- Academic research is of great importance in improving and validating halal certification processes.
- Developing academic training programs to integrate theoretical knowledge with industry practices in the halal ecosystem.



3. Addressing Halal Certification Challenges in the US

- Take stricter action against misleading halal labelling in restaurants and food establishments.
- Consumers face difficulties in verifying halal status due to the existence of multiple certification bodies and the lack of a uniform halal law.
- Implement standardized halal certification processes across the U.S. to eliminate consumer confusion.
- Strengthen collaboration with local and federal authorities to regulate and verify halal claims.
- Establishing a central national database of halal certified products for consumer verification.

4. Increasing Consumer Confidence

- Launch consumer awareness initiatives to educate the public about hidden non-halal ingredients and food additives in industrially processed foods. Encourage informed choices through clear labeling, halal certification, and transparent ingredient disclosures .
- Encourage consumers to choose products with no or minimal additives for a healthier, halal-compliant diet.
- Ensure transparency and ethical standards in halal certification to maintain consumer trust.

5. Strengthening the Halal Industry

- Increase transparency in halal accreditation to reduce costs and facilitate global trade.
- Make compliance more accessible by reducing halal certification costs for businesses.
- Strengthening halal marketing strategies to go beyond religious compliance and emphasize ethics, quality and sustainability.

6. Expansion of the Halal Market and Tourism Sector

- Standardize halal tourism regulations to ensure consistency in hospitality, travel and food services.
- Develop halal accreditation systems for global recognition and seamless consumer experience.
- To develop halal services worldwide to meet the increasing demand in Muslim and non-Muslim markets.
- Developing consumer education programs to raise awareness about the scope of the concept of halal, which goes beyond food to include areas such as finance, tourism, cosmetics and medicine.

7. Institutionalization of Halal and Tayyib Lifestyle through Education and Public Awareness

- To provide structured halal and tayyib education from early childhood to university level, together with dedicated research centers, academic programs and public awareness initiatives to ensure widespread knowledge and application of halal principles .
- To ensure compliance with Islamic principles, stay away from questionable products whose halal status is unclear or whose content is questionable.



8. Strengthening Halal Compliance in Slaughterhouses

- Implement strict halal monitoring protocols in slaughterhouses, banning stunning methods that render animals unconscious and dead before slaughter.
- More research should be done on mechanical bleeding and scalding to ensure that feather plucking is done in accordance with halal principles or, when necessary, manual slaughtering should be made mandatory.
- Requiring clear labelling of slaughtering methods in halal certified products and strengthening cooperation between halal certification bodies and regulatory authorities.



FINAL DECLARATION

Hosted by Diyanet Center of America in collaboration with Lokman Hekim University with the participation of: The Standards and Metrology Institute for Islamic Countries (SMIIC), Islamic Forum For Halal Accreditation Bodies (IFHAB), Republic of TÜRKİYE Halal Accreditation Agency (HAK), Islamic Food and Nutrition Council of America (IFANCA), USA Halal Chamber of Commerce, and Emirates International Accreditation Centre (EIAC);

The “Halal Life Panel: Contemporary Thoughts in Halal Ecosystem” was successfully held on 8-9 March 2025, hosted by Diyanet Center of America in collaboration with Lokman Hekim University, with the participation of esteemed organizations and professionals in the field of Halal accreditation, certification and standardization.

On the first day of the panel, in-depth discussions were conducted among professionals and experts working in the halal sector within the scope of the “Workshop and Network Event: Contemporary Thoughts in Halal Ecosystem.” These discussions covered the technical aspects of halal certification, regulatory frameworks, accreditation processes and emerging challenges in the global halal market. Key insights were shared on the harmonization of halal standards, mutual recognition of accreditation bodies and the importance of scientific and technological advances in halal certification.

The second day was open to the general public, focusing on the broader and more practical aspects of halal living. A public panel on the topic of halal life was held, addressing various aspects of halal practices in daily life. Discussions covered the ethical, social and economic dimensions of halal, emphasizing its impact on daily life, consumer awareness and sustainable practices within the halal ecosystem. Experts highlighted the importance of halal-conscious consumer behavior, transparency in halal certification and the need for continuous education on halal-related issues.

As a result of the panel, the following key conclusions and recommendations were made:

1. Establishing a Unified Global Halal Standard

- Strengthen international cooperation to create a globally recognized halal certification system.
- Address the fragmentation in halal certification, which creates confusion and distrust among consumers and businesses.
- Expand the adoption of the SMIIC halal certification framework among OIC countries and beyond.
- Strengthen collaboration among the Diyanet Center of America (DCA), Lokman Hekim University, IFANCA, and the USA Halal Chamber of Commerce, and continue organizing events on the halal lifestyle.
- Promote the IFHAB Multilateral Recognition Arrangement (MRA) to harmonize halal certification and remove trade barriers.
- Foster stronger collaboration between regulatory bodies, research institutions, and industry stakeholders to build trust in halal certification.

2. The Role of Academia in Strengthening Halal Certification



- Academic research is essential in improving and validating halal certification processes.
- Enhance academic training programs to integrate theoretical knowledge with industry practices in the halal ecosystem.

3. Addressing Halal Certification Challenges in the U.S.

- Implement stricter enforcement against misleading halal labeling in restaurants and food businesses.
- Consumers face difficulties verifying halal status due to multiple certifying agencies and the lack of a uniform halal law.
- Introduce standardized halal certification processes across the U.S. to eliminate consumer confusion.
- Strengthen collaboration with local and federal authorities to regulate and authenticate halal claims.
- Establish a centralized national database of halal-certified products for consumer verification.

4. Enhancing Consumer Trust

- Launch consumer awareness initiatives to educate the public about hidden non-halal ingredients and food additives in industrially processed foods. Encourage informed choices through clear labeling, halal certification, and transparent ingredient disclosures.
- Encourage consumers to choose products with no or minimal additives for a healthier and more halal-compliant diet.
- Ensure transparency and ethical standards in halal certification to maintain consumer trust.

5. Strengthening Halal Industry

- Improve transparency in halal accreditation to reduce costs and facilitate global trade.
- Reduce halal certification costs for businesses to make compliance more accessible.
- Strengthen halal marketing strategies to go beyond religious compliance and emphasize ethics, quality, and sustainability.

6. Expanding the Halal Market and Tourism Sector

- Standardize halal tourism regulations to ensure consistency in hospitality, travel, and food services.
- Improve halal accreditation systems for global recognition and seamless consumer experience.
- Enhance halal services worldwide to cater to the increasing demand in both Muslim and non-Muslim markets.
- Develop consumer education programs to raise awareness of the scope of halal beyond food, including finance, tourism, cosmetics, and medicine.



7. Institutionalizing the Halal and Tayyib Lifestyle Through Education and Public Awareness

- Introduce structured halal and tayyib education from early childhood to university levels, incorporating dedicated research centers, academic programs, and public awareness initiatives to ensure the widespread knowledge and implementation of halal principles.
- Avoid doubtful (shubuhāt) products with unclear halal status or questionable ingredients to ensure compliance with Islamic principles.

8. Strengthening Halal Compliance in Slaughterhouses

- Implement strict halal monitoring protocols in slaughterhouses, banning stunning methods that render animals unconscious or dead before slaughter.
- Conduct further research on “halal sedation methods of animals right before the slaughter, mechanical bleeding and feather plucking by scalding, ensuring compliance with halal principles, or mandate manual slaughter where necessary.
- Require clear labeling of slaughter methods on halal-certified products and strengthen collaboration between halal certification bodies and regulatory authorities.

The “Halal Life Panel: Contemporary Thoughts in Halal Ecosystem” successfully provided a platform for dialogue, knowledge exchange, and actionable solutions to advance the global halal industry. The outcomes of this panel will contribute to shaping a more standardized, transparent, and ethical halal ecosystem for the benefit of consumers and industry stakeholders worldwide.

Diyanet Center of America, along with its partners and participating institutions, extends its gratitude to all contributors and looks forward to future engagements that will further strengthen the integrity and sustainability of the global halal ecosystem.

