Handbook of Halal Food Production

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Introduction

Publication details
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Published online on: 04 Sep 2018

How to cite :- Mian N. Riaz, Munir M. Chaudry. 04 Sep 2018, Introduction from: Handbook of Halal Food Production CRC Press
Accessed on: 26 Oct 2023

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1 Introduction

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The food industry, like any other industry, responds to the needs and desires of the consumer. People all over the world are now more conscious about foods, health, and nutrition. They are interested in eating healthy foods that are low in calories, cholesterol, fat, and sodium. Many people are interested in foods that are organically produced without the use of synthetic pesticides and other non-natural chemicals. The ethnic and religious diversity in the U.S. and Europe has encouraged the food industry to prepare products, which are suitable for different groups such as the Chinese, Japanese, Italian, Indian, Mexican, Seventh Day Adventist, Vegetarian, Jewish, and Muslim communities.

Islam is the world's second largest religion and also the fastest growing, both globally and in the U.S. (Nakyinsige et al., 2012). The global Muslim population is 1.8 billion and the halal food market is estimated to be $547 billion per year in the U.S. (Dierks, 2011). The expected increase is to $2.1 trillion in tandem with a fivefold increase in the global halal food market (Dagang Asia Net, 2011). The Muslim population in the U.S. is estimated to reach 12.2 million by 2018 (USA Today, 1999). Islam is not merely a religion of rituals—it is a way of life. Rules and manners govern the life of the individual Muslim. There are a set of halal dietary rules that Muslims are expected to follow and are meant to advance their well-being (Bonne and Verbeke, 2008).

In Islam, eating is considered a matter of worship of God, just like religious prayers. Muslims follow the Islamic dietary code and foods that meet that code are called halal (lawful or permitted) (Regenstein et al., 2003). Muslims are supposed to make an effort to obtain halal food of good quality. It is their religious obligation to consume only halal food. For non-Muslim consumers, halal foods are often perceived as specially selected and processed to achieve the highest standards of quality along with being healthier.

Between 300 and 400 million Muslims are estimated to live as minorities in different nations of the world, forming a part of many different cultures and societies. The rest live in countries that have a Muslim majority although some of these countries have many other significant minority groups. In spite of their geographic and ethnic diversity, all Muslims follow their beliefs and the religion of Islam. Halal is a very important and integral part of religious observance for all Muslims. Hence, halal constitutes a universal standard for a Muslim to live by. In the UK there are about 2 to 3 million Muslims but the consumption of halal meat is estimated to include 6 million people. This shows that the halal market’s growing trend not only among Muslims but also for non-Muslims (Gregory, 2008).

By definition, halal foods are those that are free from any component that Muslims are prohibited from consuming. According to the Quran (the Muslim scripture), all good and clean foods are halal. Consequently, almost all foods of plant and animal
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origin are considered halal except those that have been specifically prohibited by the Quran and the Sunnah (the life, actions, and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad [Peace Be Upon Him, PBUH]; Shah Alam and Mohamed Sayuti, 2011).

This book, a revision of the first edition with many new additions, combines the religious and production issues that can help food manufacturers understand halal food production. Producing halal food is similar to producing regular foods, except for certain additional requirements, which will be discussed in this book. Halal foods can be processed by using the same equipment and utensils as regular food, with a few exceptions or changes. In the chapters that follow, food manufacturers will learn the requirements of halal food production and gain some knowledge about Muslims and the Muslim markets.

The book is divided into various chapters covering halal laws in general, production guidelines for various product types (including meat and poultry, fish and seafood, dairy products, cereals, and food ingredients), labeling, biotechnology, and several other areas of concern of the halal consumers.

The book presents the laws and regulations in a format that will be understandable by non-Muslims. Terminology and concepts that are generally associated with religious jurisprudence have been avoided wherever possible. The laws have been translated into general guidelines for the food industry and kindred product industries. Several chapters have been devoted to specific industries in which the authors feel that halal activity is currently the greatest:

- Chapters 2 and 3: Halal food laws and halal food guidelines for the food industries.
- Chapters 4 and 5: Muslim demographics, halal market, and the global halal economy.
- Chapters 6 and 7: Animal welfare and religious slaughter of animals: A U.S. perspective on regulations and animal welfare guidelines.
- Chapter 8: Meat and poultry products guidelines, as these are the most highly regulated segment of the food industry with respect to halal requirements. Out of five prohibited food categories, four belong to this group.
- Chapter 9: Guidelines for the processed meat industry regarding the production of halal meat products.
- Chapter 10: Explanations of the status of various fish, shellfish, crustaceans, and other seafood products as fish and seafood products are subject to more controversy than any other food group among Muslim consumers even though they are not very significant in international halal trade.
- Chapter 11: A balanced picture of dairy products requirements, with special emphasis on the use of enzymes. The expanding dairy field includes cheese and whey proteins that have received wide acceptance in non-dairy food products. Controversy over the use of porcine enzymes even with the development of chymosin-type products as rennet replacers or extenders continues among Muslim consumers.
- Chapter 12: A brief discussion on the guidelines for cereal-based products, candy, and other products, as there are relatively few controversial issues with these products for different Muslim consumers.
• **Chapter 13**: Enzymes and how are they are used in food processing as well as their sources.
• **Chapter 14**: The most important ingredient in the food industry, gelatin, has many guidelines, uses, and sources, which are all discussed.
• **Chapter 15**: The complicated ingredients and their sources that make up the many flavors used in the food industry.
• **Chapter 16**: Alcohol, while not allowed in halal food, is used heavily in food production, and thus its limits and applications are important to discuss.
• **Chapter 17**: Food additives and their use in increasing shelf life and consumer appeal as well as their sources.
• **Chapter 18**: Food ingredients and the many diverse items used all across the food industry. These may be produced from plants, animals, microorganisms, or by synthetic processes. The emphasis is on flavors, amino acids, oils and extracts, and blended products.
• **Chapter 19**: Nutritional supplements and the high visibility and demand for halal certified products throughout the world, specifically in the Southeast Asian countries.
• **Chapter 20**: Information on biotechnology and genetically modified organisms (GMO) issues as they are a major concern for halal food production.
• **Chapter 21**: Poultry and the animal feed industry and its job to provide clean feed with or without the use of animal by-product (especially pork by-product) in feed formulations.
• **Chapter 22**: Animal-based ingredients that are major issues in halal cosmetics as the halal cosmetic market is growing rapidly in the Middle East and Asia. Several companies produce halal cosmetics for these markets.
• **Chapter 23**: How to use the halal symbol on food product labels as labeling is for the benefit of consumers.
• **Chapter 24**: How to get a halal certification and the details that are needed to do so. Halal certification is a growing segment of the market and several food companies are getting or expanding their halal certification program. There are several kinds of certification and a company needs to understand the options and properly fill out the application.
• **Chapter 25**: The similarities and differences between halal, kosher, and vegetarian foods. Most of the food companies consider that halal is similar to kosher. There are several important differences between halal and kosher products.
• **Chapter 26**: The need for the globalization of halal certification and developing universal halal food guidelines for the food industry. Several countries have their own halal food laws (e.g., Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Saudi Arabia, and UAE) and their differences are a major concern of the food industry.
• **Chapter 27**: Methods that are being used to detect the adulteration of halal foods with non-halal ingredients in halal foods. These methods are being developed by several universities that have established validated scientific procedures.
• Chapter 28: Potential hazards and sanitation requirements when producing halal foods.
• Chapter 29: Halal awareness and education needed from farm to fork for halal food production.
• Chapter 30: Halal food models and how halal food companies can learn from these halal food models.
• Chapter 31: Hazard analysis and critical control points (HACCP) and how the food industry can use it with their halal program is discussed, as HACCP is an integral part of the food management system. There are several similarities between HACCP and halal control points that could benefit the food industry.

In the chapters covering halal requirements for different products categories, the concepts related to HACCP have been used to provide a framework for identifying halal control points (HCP). The objective is not to replace HACCP, which addresses food safety issues, but to complement these requirements by adding key points for halal compliance. The HCP have been presented in an easy-to-understand flowchart format. By using these guidelines, food companies are encouraged to devise their own HCP and include them in their standard operating procedures to serve as part of their self-compliance efforts.

Marketing and trade aspects of halal foods have been included in two chapters: one covers the domestic and international trade of halal food products, and the second covers import requirements for various Muslim countries as well as the Muslim population.

Finally, information has been included about procedures for getting halal certification. Food manufacturers can obtain supervision from different halal food certifying agencies such as the Islamic Food and Nutrition Council of America (IFANCA) as well as reliable information about Islam and Muslims in North America and their critical food issues. These halal-certifying agencies provide consultation services and help food industry professionals develop products that comply with Islamic food laws. These agencies also offer supervision and certification for halal foods, consumer products, and halal-slaughtered meat and poultry. Their registered trademark certification symbol, for example, the Crescent M®, appears on many product packages. The demand for halal products by many Muslim consumers can easily be an inducement for manufacturers to provide halal products. Halal markings are an important part of the general acceptance of halal products by the Muslim consumer worldwide. Certain key information with respect to halal food production is included in several appendices, such as the relevant section of Codex Alimentarius (the Food and Agricultural Organization [FAO]/World Health Organization [WHO] of the United Nation’s [UN] food standards) and the halal status of common and e-numbered (the system used by the European Union [EU]) ingredients.

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