

Halaal certification and consumer trust

By [Sameer Parker](#)

2 Jun 2021

Labelling on food and beverage products is critical for so many reasons, but the question is if consumers can trust the accuracy of these labels?



The Muslim community relies heavily on the Halaal certification stamp on products in order to know that they are able to use the product with peace of mind. The priority for Halaal consumers is to be able to trust the information included on labels to be sure that no ingredients have been masked or are undisclosed – and consumers rely on a Halaal certification label to verify its safety.

4 core certification principles

Halaal certification agencies typically focus on four core principles when they are evaluating a production facility and considering particular products for certification. The first of these is sanitation which requires that no equipment is utilised for both Halaal and non-Halal products and that measures are in place to prevent cross-contamination of any kind.

The second is traceability which requires that Halaal producing facilities involve tracking and tracing measures that ensure Halaal products are accounted for from start to finish. This requirement extends to suppliers who must disclose all relevant information regarding their ingredients.

The third principle is integrity which requires that facilities are fit to produce a clean or 'taahir' product. Ideally, the manufacturer or producer should have implemented a Halaal Area Risk Management programme within their facility.

The final principle is around composition. This requires that the producer is transparent in terms of revealing whether the facility uses any ingredients that are prohibited given that it is essential that animal-derived products used in Halaal products must be sourced from Halaal certified suppliers – or remain completely separate from Halaal products.



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Products with a Halaal certification means they have been checked by a recognised Islamic authority to ensure they don't contain any forbidden ingredients and that they have been processed in a facility that is conducive to maintaining the integrity of the Halaal status.

Hamal products (forbidden products) include things like emulsifier, animal fat and even non-Islamically slaughtered animals. Major red flags are ingredients such as alcohol, pork and other animal derivatives.

Halaal consumers rely on Halaal certifiers to conduct the intense investigation required to ensure that products are safe for consumption. Products may not include a Halall label without first being certified by a third-party certification agency.

Halaal products are in some instances slightly more expensive than non-Halaal products due to the more demanding production processes, choice of ingredients and Halaal certification process.

Even products that are generally considered Halaal should ideally go through a certification process. Milk, for example, is typically considered Halaal as it does not come from a dead animal or swine. However, the challenge arises if the same facility which processes the milk also processes forbidden products such as pork, or if the dairy products include forbidden products in their manufacture.

The fact that most dairy products are processed to some degree introduces an element of doubt. Not only should Muslim consumers be asking what else was processed at the same facility but also what ingredients were used in the processing process. Yoghurts and thickened cream products, for example, can't include any gelatin sourced from beef or pork. Cheeses can't include animal rennet unless the animal has been certified Halaal.

Ultimately, a Halaal certification assures consumers that they can enjoy food products without having to carefully study the ingredients list – or reject products because they can't be sure about its origins or sources.

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