

Canadian Halal Meats Standards



Prepared by Scholars from

The Canadian Council of Imams

&

The Canadian Council of Muslim Theologians

Halal Guidelines for Canada

2019 Edition

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah the Most Gracious and the Most Merciful.

All Praise be to Allah and May His Blessings and Peace be showered on His Prophet Muhammad, his family and all his followers.

The following document, Canadian Halal Meat Standards, has been jointly prepared over the years by Canadian Muslim scholars from the Canadian Council of Imams and the Canadian Council of Muslim Theologians and has been reviewed, approved and adopted by the Fiqh Majlis of Canada after many sessions of revision and discussion among the following scholars in consultation with experts in the meat industry:

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1.0 Animal Welfare

- 1.1 All animals must be treated in a humane manner. No animal can be beaten, abused or made to stay in traumatic conditions at any point.
- 1.2 All animal feed must be in conformity with the CFIA (Canadian Food Inspection Agency) *Feeds Act and Regulations*. Animals prepared for the Organic market must be provided with feed that follows the regulations set out in Organic Production Systems.
- 1.3 All animals should be shielded from viewing the slaughter of another animal.
- 1.4 Hanging red meat animals upside down at the time of slaughter should be avoided.
- 1.5 Following the slaughter procedure, the animal must be given sufficient time to pass peacefully before its carcass can be cut and further processed.

2.0 Poultry Slaughter

- 2.1 The person conducting the slaughter must be a Muslim of integrity who is trained and certified by a registered and accredited Canadian halal certifying agency. A Muslim of integrity is a person who is honest and upholds the moral code of Islam and practices the teachings of the religion.
- 2.2 The person conducting the slaughter should not be in the state of ritual impurity (*ṭahārah*) at the time of slaughtering.
- 2.3 The bird should face the prayer direction (*qiblah*) during the time of slaughter. Exceptions to this rule can be made at abattoirs where operations currently exist, provided infrastructural modifications cause undue hardship for the company.
- 2.4 Birds can only be stunned to render them motionless. The stunning technique must not cause them to suffer and/or die.
- 2.5 The person conducting the slaughter must recite the *Tasmiyah*: “*Bismillāhi wa Allāhu Akbar*”, or at least “*Bismillāh*” upon every individual animal prior to slaughter. (See Appendix A)
- 2.6 The person conducting the slaughter will manually slaughter each bird without exception. At no point will the person conducting the slaughter or any abattoir personal resort to slaughtering the birds mechanically with a mechanical rotating blade except when specific guidelines are followed. (See Appendix B)
- 2.7 When making the incision, the person conducting the slaughter will, in a single cut, sever the esophagus, trachea and the two jugular veins, or at least three out of four of them.

3.0 Red Meat Slaughter

- 3.1 The animal to be slaughtered must be from the category of animals that are fit for Muslim consumption. (See Appendix C)
- 3.2 The person conducting the slaughter must be a Muslim of integrity who is trained and certified by a registered and accredited Canadian halal certifying agency. A Muslim of integrity is a person who is honest and upholds the moral code of Islam.
- 3.3 The person conducting the slaughter should not be in the state of ritual impurity (*ṭahārah*) at the time of slaughtering.
- 3.4 Prior to the slaughter of the animal, penetrative captive bolt stunning cannot be employed. Non-penetrative captive bolt stunning may be employed only if needed, and only if it is not leading to instant death. Cattle should be slaughtered in a restraining box with their head placed in a head holder, which will raise the head at the time of slaughter to expose the throat. (See appendix D)
- 3.5 The animal should face the prayer direction (*qiblah*) during the time of slaughter. Exceptions to this rule can be made at abattoirs where operations currently exist, provided infrastructural modifications cause undue hardship for the company.
- 3.6 The person conducting the slaughter must recite *Tasmiyah*: “*Bismillāhi wa Allāhu Akbar*”, or at least “*Bismillāh*” upon every individual animal prior to slaughter without exception. (See Appendix A)
- 3.7 When making the incision, the person conducting the slaughter will, in a single cut, sever the esophagus, trachea and the two jugular veins without exception.

4.0 Cutting and Handling Halal Meat

- 4.0 Non-halal meat slaughter production and processing is not permitted in the same abattoir providing halal slaughter. Exceptions may be made in a facility where non-halal production takes place, provided halal slaughter is conducted on the first shift of the day on sanitized lines with sanitized equipment, and the sanitization procedures are approved by the Halal Certifying agency.
- 4.1 All equipment used for cutting, hanging, transporting, further processing must be sanitized prior to halal production, and the sanitization procedures must be approved by the Halal Certifying agency.
- 4.2 There must be no contact of halal meat with non-halal meat neither in the abattoir, processing area(s), freezers and chillers, nor at the time of packing, loading, unloading and transporting.
- 4.3 Halal Meat must be stored separately from all non-halal meats at all times by either:
 - a) Storing it in a separate facility or,
 - b) Storing it in a separate compartment within the same facility.

4.5 In the event of halal meat being stored in the same facility as non-halal meat the following must be considered:

- a) All loose halal meat must be packed and segregated in an exclusive area in the facility so that no kind of contact is made with non-halal meat.
- b) All halal meat must be labeled.
- c) The handlers of halal meat must be versed with the issues of mixing and must understand the basic rules of halal.

5.0 Ingredients

5.1 An ingredient will be considered Halal only if:

- It is plant based
- It is made from egg
- It is made from fish
- It is made from milk
- Its chemical source is halal
- Its synthetic source is halal
- Its animal-based ingredient is extracted from a *dhabīḥah* animal that meets the standards and guidelines set out in this document
- It is not manufactured by using or coming into contact with non-halal items.

5.2 In a facility where non-halal production also takes place, the halal production must be conducted on the first shift of the day on sanitized lines with sanitized equipment.

5.3 Ethanol use in the manufacturing of a non-protein product is permissible provided it is:

- Being used as a carrier and not as an active ingredient.
- Not derived from any source that results in it becoming impure upon fermentation such as grapes, raisins and dates.

Appendix A: Qur'anic Verses

Qur'anic Verses on the Compulsion of the Tasmiyah

- “So, eat that [meat] upon which Allah’s name has been taken, if you are believers in His verses.” Chapter 6, verse 118
- “And why do you not eat that [meat] upon which Allah’s name has been taken when He has explained to you in detail everything that He has forbidden for you, except for that to which you are compelled. And indeed, many do lead [others] astray through their [own] inclinations without any knowledge. Indeed, your Lord - He is most knowing of the transgressors.” Chapter 6, verse 119
- “And do not eat [meat] upon which Allah’s name has not been taken, for indeed, it is grave disobedience. And indeed, the devils do inspire their allies [among men] to dispute with you. And if you were to obey them, indeed, you would be associating [others with Him].” Chapter 6, verse 121

Appendix B: Summarized Specific Guidelines for Machine Slaughtered birds

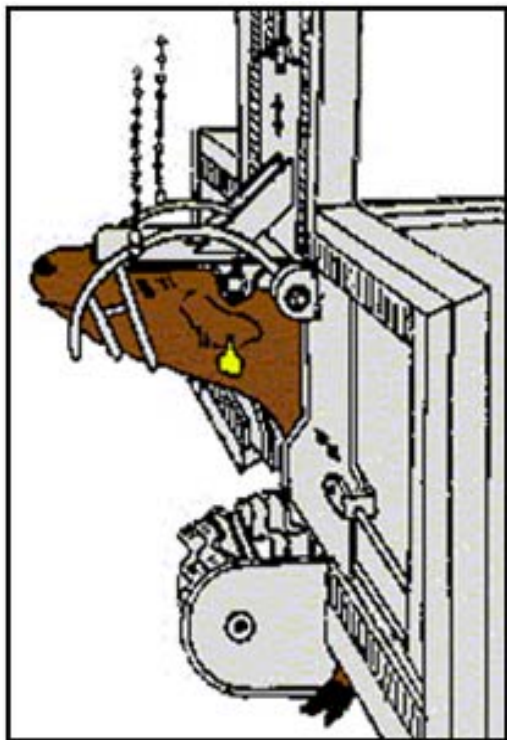
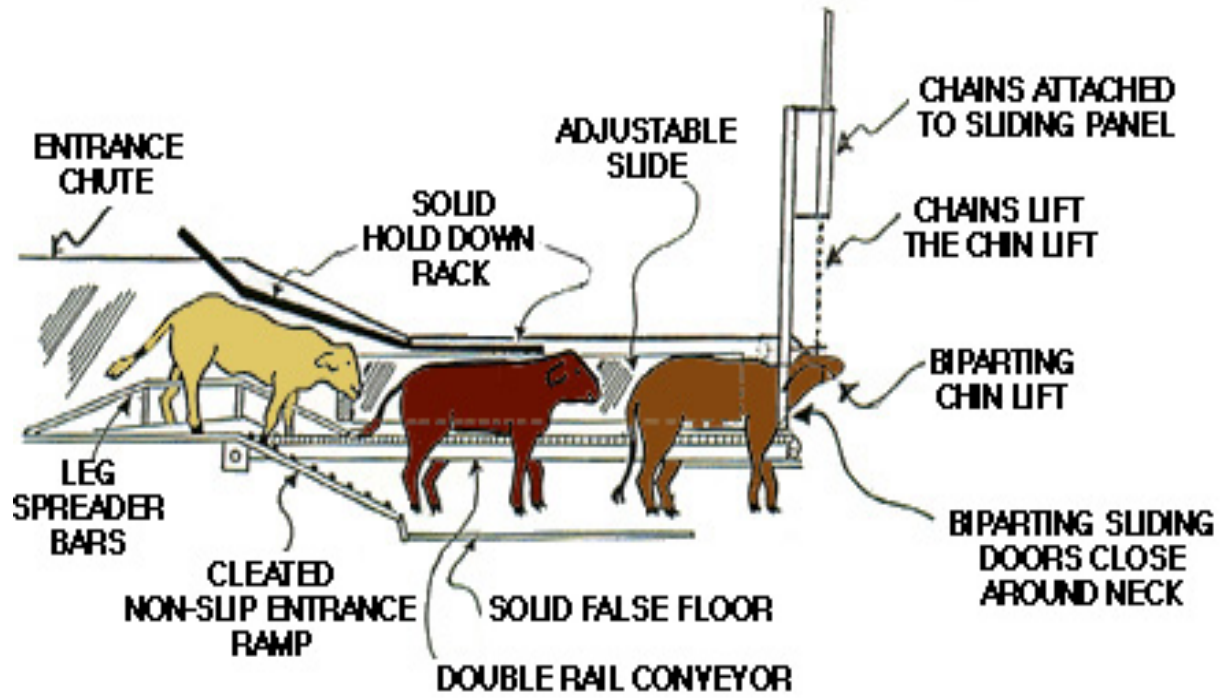
- 1) Manually slaughtered chicken is unavailable in the Canadian food market or inaccessible to a Canadian Muslim community or not enough for the Muslim population.
- 2) The one who operates the machine must be a Muslim.
- 3) The birds must be alive at the time of slaughter; stunning should not be at a level that it endangers the life of the bird.
- 4) Allah's name must be pronounced upon each individual bird at the time of slaughter. This condition cannot be compromised due to the pace of the line.
- 5) The esophagus, trachea and jugular veins of the bird must all be completely severed or at least three out of four of them.
- 6) In the event the machine fails to cut a bird properly, one of the Muslim crewmembers should manually complete the cut.

Appendix C: Permissible Meats

Red Meats fit for Muslim Consumption

- Camels
- Cattle
- Sheep
- Goats
- Deer
- Bison
- Elk
- Lama
- Rabbits
- Moose
- Caribou
- Antelope

Appendix D: Restraining Box



Appendix E:

Penetrative Captive Bolt Stunning

This method is typically used for cattle, sheep, lamb and goats. A captive bolt pistol is used to fire a bolt in to the animal's skull which enters its cranium and damages its cerebrum thus rendering it completely unconscious.

Non-penetrative Captive Bolt Stunning

This method is similar to Penetrative Captive Bolt Stunning however, the bolt is blunt with a mushroom-shaped tip. The bolt strikes the forehead with great force and immediately retracts. This concussion is responsible for the unconsciousness of the animal.

Study

It is argued that this method is the most humane away of slaughtering an animal as it saves it from pain and agony during the slaughter. However, studies clearly reveal the contrary:

Professor Schultz and his colleague Dr. Hazim of Hanover University, Germany, proved through an experiment, using an electroencephalograph (EEG) and electrocardiogram (ECG) that captive bolt stunning causes severe pain and agony to the animal.

Experimental Details

1. Several electrodes were surgically implanted at various points of the skull of all animals, touching the surface of the brain.
2. The animals were allowed to recover for several weeks.
3. One group of animals was slaughtered by making a swift, deep incision with a sharp knife in the throat cutting the jugular veins of both sides along with the trachea and oesophagus.
4. Another group of animals was stunned using a captive bolt pistol prior to slaughter.
5. During the experiment, EEG and ECG were recorded on all animals to observe the condition of the brain and heart during stunning and slaughter.

Results and Discussion

1. The first three seconds from the time of Islamic slaughter as recorded on the EEG did not show any change from the graph before slaughter, thus indicating that the animal did not feel any pain during or immediately after the incision.
2. For the following 3 seconds, the EEG recorded a condition of deep sleep - unconsciousness. This is due to a large quantity of blood gushing out from the body.
3. After 6 seconds, the EEG recorded zero level, showing no feeling of pain at all.
4. As the brain message (EEG) dropped to zero level, the heart was still pounding and the body convulsing vigorously (a reflex action of the spinal cord) driving maximum blood from the body: resulting in hygienic meat for the consumer.

Details of the study can be found here: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/18968848/Conventional-Slaughter-vs-Halal-A-Scientific-Examination#archive>

Appendix F: Definitions and Explanations

Definition of Halal and Haram

These two terms are important rulings in Islamic law. Halal is also technically known as *mubāḥ* or *jā'iz* (permissible, lawful, licit and legal). When Allah gives Muslims the choice to do or not do something, this option is called *mubāḥ*. There is no reward for carrying out the action while there is no punishment for failing to execute it.¹ For instance, people can make different food choices and develop their personal tastes within the halal diet itself. People are allowed to do many things for which they will not be held accountable. However, in cases of emergency or *iḍtirār*, a forbidden (*ḥarām*) act can become permissible (*mubāḥ*) in order to preserve human life which is of a higher priority.

Halal, or *Mubāḥ*, constitutes the largest area of Islamic law because it encompasses all human acts except for what Allah has highlighted as being bad, which must be avoided. One important Islamic jurisprudential maxim states, 'All acts are considered permissible unless communicated otherwise by Allah.' In order to consider an act permissible (*mubāḥ*), it should be either;

- Declared explicitly or implicitly as permissible by Allah,
- Be based on a Prophetic tradition (*Sunnah*),
- Or simply be permissible by default, common sense or customs.

The opposite of the permissible is *ḥarām*, (prohibited, unlawful or forbidden act) also known as *al-muḥarram* or *al-mahzūr*. An act is considered *ḥarām* when the prohibition is decisive (*ṭalab jāzim*) and one who commits the act is considered a sinner. If the *ḥarām* action is avoided, the person will be rewarded. The injunction of prohibition (*tahrīm*) uses the word *ḥarām* or a verb from the same derivation or other terms that

- Denote prohibition,
- Communicate a clear command to avoid a certain conduct,
- Promise a punishment for disobeying.²

What is Halal and Pure food?

The Qur'an says, "They ask you what is lawful for them [to consume]. Say, "Lawful for you are (all) things that are good and pure [...]"³

Food that is permissible for Muslims to consume is called "Halal" food. Most people in the West are familiar with the word "Kosher", but it is not totally the same thing. In general, as mentioned before, all food is halal except what is mentioned as haram in the primary sources of Islamic law – the Qur'an and the Sunnah. Therefore, it is easier to mention what is haram (unlawful) than to state all that is allowed to be consumed. However, there is sometimes some confusion over whether a certain product is haram or halal. This falls in the "Grey area" category that is known as 'doubtful', or *Mush'tabah*. The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him.) said in this regard,

"Halal is clear and Haram is clear. Between the two of them are doubtful matters which many people do not

¹Al-Shāṭibī, *al-Muwāfaqāt*, Vol. 1, p.76.

²Zidān, *al-Wajīz*, p. 41.

³Qur'an, Chap. 5, V.4

know of. Thus, whoever avoids doubtful matters keeps himself clear in his religion and honour. But whoever falls into doubtful matters will [eventually] fall into what is unlawful [...]”.⁴

What is Haram?

As mentioned before, Haram items are very few relatively speaking. Allah says, “Say Muhammad, ‘I do not find in the Message sent to me by revelation any (meat) forbidden to be eaten by one who wishes to eat it, unless it is dead meat, or blood poured forth, or the flesh of swine - for it is an abomination - or what is impious, (meat) on which a name has been invoked other than Allah's.” But (even so), if a person is forced by necessity, without willful disobedience, nor transgressing due limits, your Lord is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful”.⁵

“He has only forbidden for you dead meat, and blood, and the flesh of swine, and any (food) over which the name of other than Allah has been invoked. But if one is forced by necessity, without willful disobedience, nor transgressing due limits, then Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful”.⁶

“He has only forbidden you dead meat, and blood, and the flesh of swine, and that on which any other name has been invoked besides Allah’s. But if one is forced by necessity, without willful disobedience, nor transgressing due limits, then is he guiltless. For Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful”.⁷

In short, most issues pertaining to Halal and Haram food are related to meat and how they are prepared from beginning to end. A brief description of each category of Haram food is as follows:

1. The meat of an animal that is not slaughtered by a Muslim or by the People of the Book in accordance to Mosaic Law is not permissible. Allah says, “Today, (all) good and pure things are made permissible for you. The food of the People of the Book is permissible for you and your food is permissible for them”.⁸

For instance, if a person who does not believe in God performs the slaughter, then the meat becomes prohibited for Muslims to consume.

The meat of an animal that dies before being slaughtered cannot be eaten by a Muslim because it is considered Carrion. All meats from dead animals are haram to consume.

2. Pork and anything derived from it such as bacon, lard, ham, and other pig by-products are prohibited. This means that any food that has ingredients such as gelatin and pepsin, or food, which was seasoned with pork or its derivatives, and any other food items having come into contact with pork or pork by-products, is unlawful to eat. Gelatin is usually made from the skin and bones of an animal. Gelatin itself is not prohibited - for example, halal gelatin from animals such as cow, sheep etc. slaughtered according

⁴Related by al-Bukhari & Muslim

⁵ Qur’an, Chap.6, V. 145

⁶ Qur’an, Chap.16, V. 115

⁷ Qur’an, Chap.2, V. 173

⁸ Qur’an, Chap.5, V. 5

In the Shīī fiqh, the term “*ṭa’ām*” in chap. 5, v. 5 is not interpreted as “food” in general; rather, based on the Hijāzi usage of the term, it refers to “grains and vegetables” only. Hence, the meat slaughtered by the People of the Book is not permissible at all.

to the religious requirement can be consumed. Any product such as marshmallows, capsules and Jell-O containing gelatin (which is neither kosher nor halal) cannot be consumed.

Since cheese requires enzymes, pepsin etc., which are derived from pork, only halal cheese can be consumed. Also, some brands of bread, cookies, doughnuts, cakes and other baked goods could contain lard. Therefore, its ingredients must be verified.

3. Meat of carnivores is haram (not permissible). Muslims can eat beef, chicken, pigeon, turkey, duck, lamb, goat, deer, and many similar animals, which do not consume meat and birds. The Prophet ﷺ forbade every beast having a fang and every bird having a talon.⁹
4. A food or a drink, which contains alcohol or alcoholic by-products, is haram. All wine, beer, liquor, and narcotics are unlawful for consumption whether in large or small amounts (even in cooking). In brief, any intoxicant whether a liquor or a drug is haram to consume.

Allah says, “Believers, intoxicants and gambling, (dedication of) stones, and (divination by) arrows, are an abomination of Satan's handiwork: eschew such (abomination), that you may prosper”.¹⁰

5. Flowing blood and its derivatives are haram.¹¹
6. Dead animals or birds that have died a natural death are haram. They are considered impure and thus not allowed to eat except in the case of dead fish unless it is proven medically harmful due to pollution or any kind of poisoning.
7. Foods that contain certain types of ingredients extracted from unlawful sources such as dead animals or pork are also haram. The Muslim must do his/her best to avoid anything suspicious and must investigate carefully about enzymes, lecithin, L-cysteine, mono and di-glycerides, shortenings, minerals, vitamins etc.,
8. Any halal food, which was not kept isolated from haram food and was contaminated, cannot be consumed. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, “Abandon whatever puts you in doubt for that which does not put you in doubt”.¹²
9. Meat or food, which was offered and dedicated to any god other than Allah. Allah says, “He has only forbidden you from dead meat, blood, the flesh of swine, and that on which any other name has been invoked besides that of Allah”¹³

This is the reason why Muslims must mention the name of Allah while slaughtering because it is an act

⁹ Related by Muslim and others.

¹⁰ Qur'an, Chap.5, V.90

¹¹ Qur'an, Chap. 6, V.145

¹² Related by at-Tirmidhi and an-Nasa'i

¹³ Qur'an, Chap. 2, V. 173)

of worship, regardless of whether it is a sacrifice or a routine act for meat consumption; All slaughter should be by the blessing of Allah who says, “Eat not of [meats] on which Allah’s name has not been pronounced: that would be impiety”.¹⁴

Most importantly, in addition to the above, any food that was stolen by any means or was purchased with stolen or unlawful money (obtained from gambling, cheating, fraud etc.,) is haram to eat. The concept of lawful and unlawful is not just restricted on the substance and kind of food; it must also be gained through legitimate means whether through work, given as a gift, charity, or offered by family, friends or people.

¹⁴ Qur’an, Chap. 6, V. 121