



# Challenges facing the real Halal

**With focus on Halal standards and Halal accreditation agencies**

**How Important is real Halal to You?**

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التحديات التي تواجه الحلال الحقيقي  
مع التركيز على معايير الحلال ووكالات الاعتماد الحلال  
ما مدى أهمية الحلال الحقيقي بالنسبة لك؟

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معهد الكويت للأبحاث العلمية - دولة الكويت



# Opening Speech

**The consumer has the right to know**

**من حق المستهلك أن يعرف**

**And consumer are deliberately made not to know**

**ويتم عمداً جعل المستهلك لا يعرف**

## Scope:

This presentation tackles some of the challenges that, in one way or another, proves that the current international activities in Halal are not achieving requirements of the real Halal<sup>1</sup>, requirements of Halal standards<sup>2</sup> or requirements of Halal accreditation agencies<sup>3</sup>.

# Content

- Introduction
- Challenges minimizes the effectiveness of the real Halal
- How to correct these challenges?
- Challenges minimizes the effectiveness of meeting requirements of Halal standards and of Halal accreditation agencies
- How to correct these challenges?
- Conclusions
- Recommendations

# Introduction

- In almost all countries, Halal is a religious issue. Hence, the state will not intervene;
- At most, Halal is regulated under the labeling law;
- Halal certification, therefore, is conducted by many agencies/ associations/ councils/ federations, etc.; based on trust and without any type of control, and
- So far no unified Halal standard and its associated logo exist.

- The Halal market is global, but Halal is interpreted differently in different countries
- Negative perception of Halal / Islam-o-phobia is still a challenge in non Muslim countries.
- The general public, decision makers, religious Ifta committees, food scientists & technologies are not sensitive enough to Halal matters.

**1**

Lack of  
awareness in  
Halal culture

**2**

Doubts in  
Halal  
standards

**3**

Lack of  
Halal  
laboratories

**4**

Lack of  
alternative  
Halal  
ingredients

**10 Challenges**

**5**

Halal logos  
sometimes  
are not  
welcomed

**6**

Halal products  
are in the  
hand of non-  
Muslims

**7**

Muslim  
governments are  
falsely too  
confident with  
their Halal control

**8**

Ifta agencies are  
less qualified to  
deliver religious  
Fatwa on Halal



**9**

**Un necessary high  
belling invoices by  
Halal accreditation  
agencies**

**10**

**Absence of effective  
control over accredited  
Halal Certification  
Bodies, HCB**

**Challenges**

**11**

**Interference of western  
government's agencies to degrade  
Halal requirements to a level that  
suit their meat industry**

## 1. Lack of awareness in Halal culture

- The understanding of 'Halal'<sup>1</sup> or 'what is Halal'<sup>2</sup> or 'what the Halal logo mean'<sup>3</sup> is confusing among many Muslim consumers, causing misunderstanding and even fraud by certain individuals and bogus كاذبة associations "selling" Halal certificates\*.

\*(ASIDCOM research)

# Where is the problem?

- **Absence** of Halal awareness on a wide scale among consumers, Muftis, and Halal control agencies especially when it comes to hiding ingredients المكونات الخفية.
- **Existence of disputable religious Fatwas** on Halal.
- **Maneuvering** of Halal stakeholders around disputable religious issues on Halal.
- **Exploitation** إستغلال of Halal stakeholders on consumer's ignorance on Halal.

## How to correct this challenge?

- Halal definitions must be unified<sup>1</sup>, become so clear<sup>2</sup>, explicit صريحة<sup>3</sup>, and practiced stringently<sup>4</sup> by Halal stakeholders.
- Dedicated government initiatives to establish Halal education to all of its institutions.
- Muftis should be educated on Halal and make them speak as one voice of what is the real Halal.

- Religious fatwas related to Halal must be unified in line with what is currently happening in slaughterhouses and processing plants so that it read this way:

1. Free from stunning
2. Free from mechanical slaughtering
3. Free from Alcohol
4. Free from non-Muslim slaughter men
5. Free from Haram Najis ingredients or Istihala\*.

5F

**Collectively these 5F commands of Halal I called them:**

\*As a mean of looking at Haram Najis ingredients as Halal based on the assumption of transformation or consumption theory.

**5F-Halal**

## 2. Doubts in Halal standards

- International Halal standards, or so called Halal standards, many of which have pitfalls, i.e. allowing non-Halal practices<sup>1</sup>, and non-Halal ingredients<sup>2</sup> to penetrate into the markets under legal frame.

# Where is the problem?

## Is what we read in these standards, for example:

- Halal slaughtering is best done without stunning, however, if necessary, stunning can be used!
- Stunning is not acceptable but mechanical slaughtering is acceptable!

How can that be? You can not mechanically slaughter without stunning.

- Ethyl alcohol produced by fermentation is not allowed, however, if produced synthetically it is allowed! What is the difference between the two?

And which type of alcohol is commercially available on a wide scale.



- Finally, the presence of Najis materials is not allowed, however, if present in minute amounts, such as enzymes, this is called: a form of transformation or subjected to the theory of consumption, i.e. Istihala, then what follows that there presence is allowed!

## How to correct this challenge?

- We should look at Halal standards as guidelines rather than Fatwa! This way disputable religious issues will be minimized.
- We should stick with unanimous religious Fatwas of prominent scholars on Halal issues rather than the exceptional religious view of a single prominent scholar.

### 3. Lack of Halal laboratories

- The lack of Halal laboratories is a universal challenge to the real Halal.
- The importance of these laboratories is to provide necessary technical supports to strengthen Halal certification Services.

# Where is the problem?

- The rare availability of accredited Halal laboratories.
- The rare availability of qualified Muslim technicians to run Halal analyses, is another big challenge to the real Halal.
- The lack of approved Halal analysis protocols is an obstacle, and this is important as well for the unification of Halal analysis results.

## How to correct this challenge?

- Accrediting Halal laboratories.
- Qualifying Muslim Halal analysts.
- Making Halal analysis protocols not monopolized by leading Halal R&D centers like Putra University of Malaysia and make them patented-free to be used worldwide, especially by laboratories in Muslim countries.

## 4. Lack of alternative Halal ingredients

- The lack of alternative Halal ingredients will lead to lack of Halal products.
- Examples of alternative Halal ingredients:
  1. Fat, glycerin, and salts of fatty acids – > Halal & vegetable sources
  2. Protein concentrate (whey), and gelatin – > Halal & vegetable gelling agents sources
  3. Enzymes – > Halal sources
  4. Alcohol for external use – > isopropyl

# Where is the problem?

- Alternative Halal ingredients are not requested or encouraged to be produced.
- Alternative Halal ingredients do not have a strong market.
- Governments do not care to request alternative Halal ingredients in imported or locally produced products.
- Importers as well as consumers do not bother to ask for alternative Halal ingredients.

## How to correct this challenge?

- Promote Halal awareness among manufacturers, government agencies, and consumers to request alternative ingredients from Halal sources.
- Governments should encourage<sup>1</sup> and interfere<sup>2</sup> to impose فرض<sup>3</sup> the use of alternative ingredients from Halal sources in food and non-food products.



## 5. Halal logos sometimes are not welcomed

- Halal logos sometimes are not welcomed on certain products like cosmetics! This is because of the belief that the presence of Halal logo on these products will degrade their values.
- Many do not know that Halal logos are not just symbols of guarantee for Muslims that what they're buying is allowed by their religion, but also for businesses looking to expand to reach Muslim countries and beyond.
- They also do not know that Halal logos have now become a symbol of quality and religious compliance and this makes it sound as the **new green**.

# Where is the problem?

- The existence of non trustworthy Halal certification bodies.
- The absence of Halal regulations that require Halal logos on food and non-food items imported to Muslim countries.
- The lack of Halal awareness on the value of having Halal logo on Halal products.

## How to correct this challenge?

- Establish Halal awareness.
- Provide results from sound techno-economic studies on the profitability of putting Halal logo on products.
- Establishing a regulation on the compulsory use of Halal logo on Halal products.

## 6. Halal products are in the hand of non-Muslims

- Most of the so called international Halal products are in the hand of non-Muslims.
- In the year 2009, McDonald's in Singapore has seen an influx of eight million customers a year after obtaining a Halal certification.
- Since being certified Halal, KFC, Burger King and Taco Bell have all seen an increase of 20 per cent in customers

# Where is the problem?

- How one can be sure 100% with no doubts, in countries other than Malaysia\*, that famous food brands owned by non-Muslims are complied with the requirements of the real Halal?
- What is the companies' definition of Halal?
- How is Halal is being controlled by these companies? And by Whom?
- Most of these non-Muslim International food and non-food companies uses stunning, or alcohols, or even Najis materials present in minute amounts in their products. They announced it loudly on their websites, but no one read.

\*The Department of Islamic Development (Jakim), state religious departments (JAIN), and state Islamic councils (MAIN)

## How to correct this challenge?

- Increase the awareness of Muslim consumers of the view of Halal by non-Muslim and by local government regulations.
- Muslim governments must interfere to request the real Halal on imported products.
- Only approved accredited Halal Certification Bodies should certify international Halal products as Halal.

## 7. Muslim governments are falsely too confident with their Halal control

- Muslim governments are too confident with their Halal control agencies that in reality are too ignorant of what the real Halal is or how to control it.
- Being a member of Halal committees, or attending Halal conferences or Halal trainings courses will not make someone an expert on Halal, and individuals should investigate and search for what is the real Halal.

# Where is the problem?

- Government control agencies have little information on what products (food and non-food) should be analyzed for Halal, what ingredients should be under question, and what protocol to follow in laboratory for Halal analysis.
- One always hear: we have good Halal control<sup>1</sup>, every thing is fine<sup>2</sup>, (Mafee Mushkelah) or we do not need help<sup>3</sup>.



## How to correct this challenge?

- Increase awareness of the real Halal among Halal control agencies.
- Collaborate with international Halal certification body to control Halal in Muslim countries to name but few: HFFIA and Halal correct of Holland, HMC, EHDA, and Halal Assurance of UK, Halal control of Germany, and Halal Verif, AVS, Halal service and WMCO/ASIDCOM of France and GIMDES from Turkey.

## 8. Ifta agencies are less qualified to deliver religious Fatwas on Halal

- Few international conferences and workshops on the permissibility of the **consumption** or **the use** of certain **practices** in productions of Halal products, or **the use of non Halal ingredients** in food and non-food items has shown that **they approve the deliberate manipulation** of **Haram practices** or **acts on Haram ingredients** to make them Halal.

# Where is the problem?

- Official Ifta agencies have shown to be less qualified to deliver religious Fatwas on emerging contemporary issues on Halal like stunning<sup>1</sup>, mechanical slaughtering<sup>2</sup>, presence of alcohol<sup>3</sup>, and have disputable stand on what is or what is not a transformed material from Najis sources<sup>4</sup>.
- Individual sheikhs (i.e. religious figures) some times give wrong Fatwas on Halal and such fatwas spread around with the speed of light.
- People listen only from religious figures even if they are less qualified to speak on Halal issues.

## How to correct this challenge?

- Must have fully dedicated Halal Ifta agency that is experts with emerging contemporary issues on Halal.
- Individual religious figures should be educated on what is the real Halal.

## 9. Un necessary high belling invoices by Halal accreditation agencies

- Although some Halal accreditation agencies' belling invoices compared to belling invoices of other Halal accreditation agencies is some what lower, their belling invoices are still too high.
- Some of the expenses that are forced to be covered to Halal accreditation office are: 1) business class travelling tickets; 2) accommodation in five start hotel.

- Some times HCB are forced to pay **Shubha/Haram** money to **some** Halal accreditation officers (personal communications).
- And in some other time, a member of a Halal accreditation agency visits a single country for a number of Halal certification bodies and requests cash money from each for the cost of the business class and surprisingly he comes on an economy class.

## Where is the problem?

- Despite the eagerness **رغبه قويه** and their good intentions in servicing Halal, the Halal accreditation agencies are financially burdening HCB to fulfill a noble cause.
- HCB are willing to coupe with all financial requirements of any Halal accreditation agency but this will be on the expenses of assuring the real Halal.
- When money is involve in achieving the real Halal their will be concessions somewhere down the stream within the Halal chain that may jeopardize achieving the real Halal.
- Halal accreditation agencies being emerging from governmental bodies should not be involved Halal business or looked at Halal as a business deal.

## How to correct this challenge?

- Halal accreditation agency must give up their initial high belling invoice to HCB, they should refrain from acting as a halal certification body, as this is happening that an accreditation agency act both as a judge and as certifier.
- The high belling invoice by Halal accreditation agencies must be reduced to minimum, especially when it comes to unnecessary expenses items.



## 10. Absence of effective control over accredited HCB

- Accredited Halal certification bodies are not Halal controlled at all. Religious mistakes in Halal comet before by HCB after accreditation are continued to be practiced (e.g. use of mushroom gun, stunning of chickens, etc.,).
- What accreditation process seamed to be is a quality management system that deals with documents<sup>1</sup> and records<sup>2</sup> more than fulfilling requirements of the real Halal or at least International Halal standards.

## Where is the problem?

- Accreditation agencies are more oriented to be a quality management system rather than Halal. Reorientation of the accreditation process must take place in such a way to focus mainly on Halal.
- Accreditation processes in Halal is a challenge to accreditation agencies that must involve also religious scholars and muftis in which at present non are involve.

## How to correct this challenge?

- Halal accreditation processes must be reviewed and should be looked at as it is the task of religious scholars rather than the a job of the normal routine activities of accreditation officers.

## 11. Interference of western government's agencies to degrade Halal requirements to a level that suit their meat industry

- Western governments have tried in so many ways to dilute the effect of HCB to minimum under the excuses of legislation, animal welfare, and socio-economic issues.
- Ministry of Primary industry of Australia (1983)
- DIALREL (Dialogue on the religious slaughter)
- ONR (Austria normalization organization)
- AFNOR (French association for normalization)
- CEN (Committee for European normalization)
- BECI (Brussels House for trade and companies)

## Where is the problem?

- Halal standards are not fully implemented
- Halal religiously is endangered when it is under the control of non-Muslims

## How to correct this challenge?

- Muslim governments through their ministry of foreign affairs should send a clear message to the meat industries in exporting countries that:
- Halal is a religious issue that must be fully and only controlled by Muslim HCB.
- Halal standards must be fully respected and fully implemented.

# Conclusion

- The real Halal can only be achieved by **going strict Halal**.
- Halal awareness is the key to solve many Halal issues.
- Alternatives to Haram can be provided in robust amounts.
- Under normal circumstances, Haram materials are not allowed to be used for any purpose.
- Orders of Allah almighty delivered to us to implement them and not for maneuvering around them.
- Accredited Halal certification bodies are not under control of Halal accreditation bodies.
- Halal accreditation bodies are involved in Halal businesswise.

## Recommendations

- Halal awareness programs must be established at early educations.
- Muslim consumers should be educated on Halal terminologies and what do they imply in their daily life.
- Muslim consumers should not rely totally in Halal on their governmental control agencies; they must depend on themselves by questioning before buy.
- Governments should request from international companies to provide the real Halal.
- Muslim governments should show their support HCB.



- Muslim scholars should unite with one opinion on Halal and Haram on emerging issues.
- Accreditation agencies must reorient themselves to focus mainly on Halal rather than solely on the requirements of quality management systems.
- Finally, government bodies concerned in pursuing halal should establish a deterrent punishments عقوبات رادعة to anyone who begs يسول himself by passing transactions for uncertified Halal shipments.

## References

\*This article was originally written in Arabic and taken from the book “My Food, under review for 2017”, by its author Dr. Hani Mansour Mosa Al-Mazeedi. Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research.      References for this articles are found in the book My Food.

# شكراً لاستماعكم



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