



EUROPEAN INSTITUTE
OF HALAL CERTIFICATION

Halal Standards

for Halal Certification

EHZ - Europäisches Halal Zertifizierungsinstitut

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Table of Contents

1. About the EHZ	3
2. The Food Industry	3
3. What is Halal?	3
4. Meat, the consumption of which is forbidden (Haram)	4
5. Halal Monitoring, Quality Control and EHZ Certification	4
5.1. Islamic Regulations for Halal Slaughter	4
5.2. Halal Foodstuffs (that which is allowed)	6
5.3. Haram products (that which is forbidden)	6
5.4. Mandatory provisions and requirements for the production of foodstuffs according to halal	6
6. Certification	7
 Appendix:	
Appendix I: Animal welfare regulations for the slaughter of poultry, sheep and cattle	8
Appendix II: Animal Welfare in Islam	11

1. About the EHZ

The European Institute of Halal Certification (EHZ) is supported by the Islamic Council for the Federal Republic of Germany and also by the Alliance of the Islamic Communities in Northern Germany (Registered Society). We specialize in the inspection and certification of products and production methods for the food industry according to the Islamic halal regulations. Through our halal monitoring and certification system we offer consumers and businesses alike a guaranteed, trusted certification for halal products according to Islamic regulations. Reports are examined by the Council of Islamic Scholars, which must agree to the granting of all certificates. Our halal product logo stands for proven halal quality.

2. The Food Industry

In our multi-faith society, attention must be paid to more than simply following a healthy diet. The concept of what is allowed and what is forbidden occupies a central position in the teachings of Islam, influencing both the lifestyle and everyday experience of the devout Muslim. This concept also plays a crucial part in the area of nutrition: Islam demands that Muslims observe certain regulations concerning food, drink and the slaughter of animals:

“The foodstuff must be allowed – that is, it must be halal.”

This is not easy to ensure, because we are living in an age of mass production and automation, which makes possible a great variety of different foodstuffs. Many products are forbidden to Muslims on religious grounds, because these products do not comply with halal regulations. Generally, this results in a deliberate decision not to consume the product – or at least to a sense of uncertainty or mistrust when purchasing.

Using the EHZ certification system, abattoirs and the meat processing and food industries are able to produce halal products according to halal regulations.

Many producers have already decided on this standard and are profiting from additional turnover as a result of the observation of halal regulations.

3. What is Halal?

Halal (or Helal) is Arabic for “that which is permitted, that which is allowed,” and defines everything that is allowed for Muslims, according to the Koran and the Prophet Muhammed (s.a.v.)¹.

As applied to foodstuffs, halal means that the product is suitable for consumption by all Muslims. The following requirements must be met: the product does not contain pork meat; the product does not contain alcohol nor blood; all meat products are made only from those animals that are allowed under Islam and that were slaughtered according to Islamic ceremony (for example, only true herbivores such as sheep, cows, poultry, etc.).

If products are offered for consumption that are not commonly eaten – such as crocodile or kangaroo meat, for example – we ask that an explicit request be made.

It is written, that only those foodstuffs are halal, that

- 3.1 were clearly produced using raw materials and methods that are halal
- 3.2 come from permitted animals, which were slaughtered according to the Islamic rule
- 3.3 were made from products classified as “pure” according to Islamic law. Blood, excrement, pork meat and meat from animals that died from natural causes are classed as impure or forbidden.

¹ Sallallahu aleyhi vesellem: The blessing and peace of God be upon him.

- 3.4 were produced from, or using, seafood. In Islam, seafood is in principle halal and, since seafood animals are cold-blooded, they do not need to be slaughtered.
- 3.5 neither include alcohol, nor were produced using alcohol (absolute prohibition against alcohol)

4. Meat, the consumption of which is forbidden² (Haram)

- 4.1 Meat of “perished animals” – that is, meat from cattle and poultry that died of natural causes, without first being slaughtered or hunted down by man
- 4.2 Sick animals, whose consumption is forbidden on health grounds
- 4.3 Pork meat
- 4.4 Animals that were not consecrated to Allah
- 4.5 An animal that was strangled or suffocated
- 4.6 An animal that was beaten to death with a stick or similar implement
- 4.7 An animal that perished as a result of a fall – for example from an elevation, or which fell into a ditch or down a ravine
- 4.8 An animal that died as a result of being run through by the horns of another animal
- 4.9 An animal that was partially consumed by other animals, and which died of these wounds
- 4.10 Animals scalded to death by a defeathering process using boiling water or steam, or animals with damaged internal organs

5. Halal Monitoring, Quality Control and EHZ Certification

Our monitoring guarantees the foodstuffs in question an uninterrupted compliance with Islamic regulations: from raw material to final product. The individual halal requirements for each product are also tested by independent laboratory analysis, as required, in order to exclude even the smallest possibility of contamination.

5.1 Islamic Regulations for Halal Slaughter

- 5.1.1 Animals must not be forbidden for consumption by Muslims (haram)
- 5.1.2 The slaughter process must be carried out by a Muslim slaughterman

² Koran Sura 5 Verse 3 und 4

“Forbidden to you is the meat of perished animals, and blood, and the meat of pigs – and also that which was consecrated to another, and not Allah; that which was strangled, that which was beaten to death, that which fell to its death or which was gored to death, and that, whereof predatory animals have eaten. That which you slaughter yourselves is excepted – but not that, which was slaughtered on a heathen altar. Furthermore it is also forbidden for you to seek to know its fate using games of chance: that is an act of abomination. The unbelievers have surrendered to your religion today; therefore do not fear them, fear me. I have perfected your religion today and completed my clemency to you and chosen for you the religion of Islam. However, the one who is forced by the pangs of hunger, but does not sin through appetite – in this case is Allah all-forgiving, and merciful.”

“They will ask you, what is lawful for them. Say to them: ‘All good things are lawful, and (the spoils of) trained hunting animals – those who you instruct, as Allah has instructed you. Eat of that, which you catch for yourselves, consecrate it to Allah, and fear Allah.’ Know that Allah settles accounts most speedily.”

- 5.1.3 Animals must be alive at the time that the halal slaughter takes place
- 5.1.4 Methods for stunning animals, in order to minimize pain and suffering of animals in the slaughter process, should be used – although when stunning methods are used, the current state of scientific research should be consulted, for the safety of the animals concerned. Animals must not die before the throat is cut.
- 5.1.5 It is mandatory that Allah's name is uttered for every single animal undergoing halal slaughter³.
- 5.1.6 However, when the automated halal slaughter of poultry is involved, it is sufficient to call Allah's name before starting the machinery: the repetition for each single animal is not necessary. Allah's name must be called by the Muslim employee responsible each the time the machine is restarted – even after only a short interruption. Animals that escape the automated halal slaughter process must be slaughtered afterwards individually by Muslims – in this case, Allah's name must be called for each individual animal.
- 5.1.7 Animals must not be subjected to stress or ordeal. The conveyance to the halal slaughter must be made as comfortable as possible⁴. The instruments for slaughter must be sharp enough to ensure the most stress-free and quick halal slaughter that is possible.
- 5.1.8 Halal slaughter is considered complete when the airway, oesophagus and both arteries located beneath the larynx have been quickly and completely cut. At least three of these four locations must be cut completely.
- 5.1.9 It is not desirable that the neck is broken during the slaughter process.
- 5.1.10 The animal slaughtered according to halal must be confirmed as being completely bled-out.
- 5.1.11 Machines and equipment that are used for the slaughter or killing of animals that Muslims are not allowed to consume cannot be used for the halal slaughter process without having been cleaned first. The place used for halal slaughter must be completely free from contamination resulting from pork meat or meat that is not halal.
- 5.1.12 The regulations found in the Appendix that deal with the slaughter of poultry, sheep and cattle according to animal welfare regulations are part of these certification regulations and must be observed.

Regulations that should be observed:

- 5.1.13 It is not desirable, that the animals to be slaughtered observe the slaughter process
- 5.1.14 Animals should be prevented from hearing the death cries of other animals
- 5.1.15 Animals should see neither how sharp the knife is, nor the preparation of the slaughter implements
- 5.1.16 Animals should not be subjected to stress or pain during the slaughter process

³Koran Sura 6 Verse 118 "Therefore eat that upon which Allah's name was uttered, if you believe in His Revelation.." and in Sura 6 Verse 121 "Do not eat from that upon which Allah's name was not uttered, for truly, that is an abomination. Certainly, the devils will cause their allies to argue with you. If you obey them, you will become idol worshippers."

⁴ Appendix: Animal Welfare in Islam

5.2 Halal Foodstuffs (that which is allowed)

- 5.2.1 Raw materials made from plants are halal, as long as fermentation has not been started, and as long as the necessary rules are observed during the production process.
- 5.2.2 Raw materials made from animals are halal, if sourced from animals that are allowed, that were slaughtered according to halal, and which therefore have the relevant halal certificate, issued by an Islamic institution recognized by the Islamic Council. This does not apply to seafood animals, since they do not need to be slaughtered.

5.3 Haram products (that which is forbidden)

In Islam, the following basic rule exists: “that which is not expressly forbidden, is allowed”. This means that only those things that are defined as forbidden by the Koran and Sunna are forbidden for consumption.

- 5.3.1 The following animal raw materials are haram and forbidden for consumption by Muslims: meat from animals that died of natural causes; blood; pork meat; the meat of predatory animals with tusks or birds of prey with claws; the meat of animals that are allowed, but which did not receive a halal slaughter.
- 5.3.2 Alcohol as a stimulant – regardless of form or concentration – is without exception forbidden and absolutely HARAM. Trade in alcohol is also HARAM.

5.4 Mandatory provisions and requirements for the production of foodstuffs according to halal

- 5.4.1 Halal raw materials must be provided with a certificate from an abattoir that slaughters according to the Islamic rule, and which has been certified by an institution recognized by the Islamic Council. Before production starts, the authorized employee makes a thorough inspection of the halal meat by checking that the veterinary control numbers on the meat agree with the information on the halal certificate.
- 5.4.2 The halal production line must be kept completely separate – or, according to the situation, certain parts of the factory must be kept apart. If this can not be done, then exceptional conditions must be agreed on by consultation with the EHZ.
- 5.4.3 It must be ensured that machinery is clean and dry, in order to prohibit any contact with non-halal foodstuffs.
- 5.4.4 All equipment necessary for the production of halal food must also be cleaned.
- 5.4.5 Workers involved in the halal production line must not come into contact with any foodstuffs that are not halal.
- 5.4.6 Halal meat must not come into contact with pork meat or non-halal meat at any time: whether in the abattoir, in refrigerated or frozen storage, or at any time during loading, transport and unloading.
- 5.4.7 Ingredients, additives and colorings must conform with halal regulations.
- 5.4.8 It must be ensured that no contact with haram products is possible during packing or storage.

6. Certification

The Halal Inspector is not connected with the abattoir in any way, nor with the firm involved in production. Any interference with this independence results in an immediate revocation of the halal certification for the company involved.

It is important to give the Halal Inspector access at all times to each and every phase of slaughter, processing and manufacture. Places of manufacture must also agree to unannounced halal inspections.

Certification carries a certification charge and is valid for one calendar year.

Where necessary, laboratory tests will be carried out by independent laboratories. Resulting costs will be documented and passed on to the manufacturers.

The final certification takes place when all tests made as a result of on-site visits have been completed – plus laboratory analysis where applicable. Once the certification has been agreed on by the Institute's Scholarly Council, the certificate becomes legally valid and the company concerned can use the halal logo.

If it is discovered that the manufacturer has infringed halal regulations and the animal welfare regulations for slaughter, the EHZ is obliged to publicize this infringement and to arrange for the immediate revocation of the certificate. Any products offered for sale that carry the Certification Institute's halal logo must be recalled and destroyed, with the costs being borne by the manufacturer.

Appendix I:

Animal welfare regulations for the slaughter of poultry, sheep and cattle

Drawn up in association with the Institute for Consultation and Training in the Considerate Handling of Animals for Breeding and Slaughter (*Beratungs- und Schulungsinstitut für schonenden Umgang mit Zucht- und Schlachttieren*) (BSI), Schwarzenbek. Postbox 1469, 21487 Schwarzenbek. Phone 04151-7017 Fax: - 894046.

1. General Issues

- 1.1 The slaughter of cattle, sheep and poultry must take place according to the laws of animal welfare and meat hygiene. Sick animals must not be slaughtered (the regulations state that the veterinarian must inspect the live animal).
- 1.2 Animal welfare law: the requirements of the animal welfare law and the animal welfare ordinance on slaughter must be met when slaughtering poultry, cattle and sheep.
- 1.3 Staff competence: any employee that immobilizes, stuns or slaughters animals (performs the throat cut) must possess an official professional certification, according to §4 TierSchIV (animal welfare ordinance on slaughter).
- 1.4 The facilities and equipment used must undergo regular operational inspection, maintenance and cleaning. Facilities used for immobilizing and stunning cattle must be proven suitable for short-term electrical stunning (an expert opinion given by a qualified veterinarian, for example from the BSI, is recommended). Stunning methods must be applied according to the latest scientific standards and must be carried out in a way that causes animals to become insensible and unconscious quickly and without pain or suffering.

2. Immobilizing, stunning and bleeding-out

According to current scientific and technical expert opinion, poultry, sheep and cattle can be stunned almost instantaneously using electrical stunning methods, making a painless slaughter through bleeding-out possible. When using electrical head-only stunning according to the specifications for minimum current strength and duration as given in the animal welfare ordinance on slaughter, the animals will be stunned and not killed.

In order to accommodate the needs of members of certain religious communities, for whom other stunning practices are forbidden by the regulations of their religious community, the so-called short-term electrical stunning method can be used (minimum current duration 2 seconds, application of electrical current to the heart waived for cattle 6 months or older). The use of short-term electrical stunning requires authorization according to §14 (2) Item 3 TierSchIV (animal welfare ordinance on slaughter).

- 2.1. Cattle: Short-term electrical stunning is a method that conforms to the regulations for the production of halal meat.
 - 2.1.1 Cattle must be stunned in a standing position. Animals must not be allowed to turn around before stunning takes place.
Facilities used to restrict animal movement must not cause unnecessary stress, pain, suffering or injury. Such facilities must enable the electrodes to be applied correctly and an immediate bleeding-out to take place.
The equipment must hold the animal that is to be stunned firmly, both to immobilize the animal before stunning, and also during the stunning process – in order to ensure that the current is not prematurely interrupted.
If bleeding-out is to take place in a standing position, the stunned animal must be held firmly in a suitable position even after stunning. If bleeding-out is to take place in a lying position, the animal must be released quickly.
 - 2.1.2 Suitable electrodes must be used for stunning, in such a way that a sufficient current is able to pass through the brain: for example, between eye and ear, or, with automated facilities, between the back

of the neck and the nose.

Current must be passed using a constant current stunner. A current strength of at least 2.0 amps must be reached within one second and held for at least two seconds in order to achieve a safe stun. The equipment must clearly indicate any errors in the stunning process to the user.

- 2.1.3 The bleeding-out process must enable a rapid and plentiful flow of blood. Bleeding-out can take place in either a standing or lying position. A chest cut, to the large blood vessels near the heart, must be made immediately after the halal cut has taken place. This prevents the animals regaining consciousness and enables a rapid bleeding-out. The bleeding-out process must be monitored.

- 2.2 Sheep: Short-term electrical stunning is a method that conforms to the regulations for the production of halal meat.

- 2.2.1 Sheep can be stunned in a standing position, in a sitting position (as used when shearing wool), or in a lying position on a slaughter table.
Animals must be both brought to the slaughter position and also held there in such a way that avoids any unnecessary stress, pain, suffering or injury.
Sheep must not be held by their pelt (wool).
A correct application of the electrodes and an immediate bleeding-out must be possible.

- 2.2.2 A constant current stunner must also be used for stunning. A current strength of at least 1.0 amps must be reached within one second and held for at least two seconds in order to achieve a safe stun. The equipment must clearly indicate any errors in the stunning process to the user.
Electrodes suitable for sheep ('sheep barbs') must be used. The electrodes must be applied to both temples.

- 2.2.3 Bleeding-out can take place in either a standing or lying position. The bleeding-out process must enable a rapid and plentiful flow of blood. The bleeding-out process must be monitored.

- 2.3. Poultry: There are two methods of electrical stunning for poultry that conform to the regulations for the production of halal meat. Poultry must be stunned either by using an electrical current passed through a water bath (conveyor belt slaughter), or by a stun to the head, done manually (slaughter of individual animals using tongs or v-shaped electrodes). Stunning poultry using gas is also an alternative for the production of halal meat.

- 2.3.1 Facilities used to restrict animal movement must not cause unnecessary stress, pain, suffering or injury. Such facilities must enable a correct current to be applied through the heads of the animals.

When poultry are hung up for *stunning in a water bath*, they must not be left head downwards for more than three minutes. Animals must be kept as calm as is possible (using blue light or a chest strap) whilst they remain hanging.

Shackles must not crush the animals' legs: it is recommended that shackles are made wet in order to ensure a good flow of current.

Animals must enter the water bath head-first and must not receive any premature electric shock – whether from overflowing water or from other parts of their body entering the water first.

The height of the water bath must be set up so that both the head and the neck of the animal enter the water.

When using *manual stunning*, animals can be placed in a killing cone or held by hand and then placed in a killing cone for bleeding-out.

- 2.3.2 When carrying out *poultry stunning in a water bath*, current must be 200-400 Hertz sinusoidal alternating current, and must be maintained for at least 10 seconds, using the following current strengths (per bird): 120 milliamperes for chickens, 130 milliamperes for ducks, 150 mA for turkeys. As an example: for ten broilers entering the bath simultaneously, this would be $10 \times 120 \text{ mA} = 1.2 \text{ amps}$.

When carrying out manual poultry stunning, current must be 50 Hertz sinusoidal alternating current, applied until the birds straighten out (at least 4 seconds). Current strengths (per bird) are 600 milliamperes for ducks or geese, and 400 mA for turkeys. The equipment must clearly indicate any errors in the stunning process to the user.

- 2.3.3 If the animals are not going to remain in cages, then the container used for transport must be emptied carefully, so that the animals have enough space on the conveyor belt and do not fall on top of each

other. When the animals reach the gas chamber, they must not flap about. The concentration of CO₂ should only be increased above 40% when the animals are no longer able to stand. The facilities must be equipped with windows, so that the animals behavior can be observed whilst being gassed. The concentration of gas and duration of the gassing must be recorded. Facilities used for the stunning of poultry with gas should be inspected by a qualified veterinarian (for example, from the BSI).

For the bleeding-out process, the main blood vessels on both sides of the neck must be cut through as quickly as possible – although when using electrical stunning, this can be done up to 7 seconds after the current ceases to flow. The bleeding-out process must enable a rapid and plentiful flow of blood. The bleeding-out process must be monitored.

3. Inspection of stunning methods

All animals must be stunned before the throat cut. The stunned state must be maintained until the animals have lost so much blood that it can be assured that the perceptive and sensory faculties no longer function. The effectiveness of the stunning method must be monitored. If the events described in 3.1. and 3.2. do not occur, then a secondary stunning must take place. The error in the process must be found out and resolved.

- 3.1 Sheep and cattle must become rigid at the moment that the electrodes are applied. Audible cries must not be present at the moment that the electrodes are applied, nor during the electrocution process. After the application of current, the animal's body spasms for a short while, and this is then followed by a period of convulsive movements. No purposeful movements of body or eyes, attempts to stand, or regular breathing should be identifiable once the current has been switched off – nor during the ensuing bleeding-out process.
- 3.2 Poultry must become rigid at the moment they enter the water bath or at the moment the tongs or v-electrodes are applied to the head. Audible cries must not be present during the electrocution process, nor should wing movement. No wing movement, regular breathing, sudden eye movement, attempts to stand, or cries should occur once the current has been switched off. (When stunning manually, temporary tremors and wing movement do occur).

4. Further abattoir work

Further abattoir work must not begin until at least two minutes after the throat cut, and only when the animal has stopped moving.

5. Management

The slaughter procedures should be discussed with abattoir management and staff, together with the veterinarians from the veterinary department responsible. Abattoir management must ensure that the animal welfare slaughter regulations are followed.

Appendix II: Animal Welfare in Islam

Islam requires that humans treat animals as creatures whose life and well-being should be protected, and who should not be exposed to pain, suffering, or injury without good reason. Islam's philosophy of animal welfare in fact goes even further, forbidding not only physical mistreatment, but also mental and even verbal abuse of animals.

These Islamic animal welfare ordinances are based solely on the two major sources, the Koran and the Sunna, and are, like all other rights and responsibilities, valid in all situations, independent of the interests of any one person or group of persons. This means that they must be obeyed by all Muslims, in all communities.

According to Islamic law, it is an obligation for all Muslims to treat all their fellow creatures (which includes all animals) according to their needs – considerately, respectfully, and affectionately. This obligation concerning care and protection, together with its implicit responsibility of Muslims for all creatures, is drawn from the Islamic philosophy of the Creation: the equality of all creatures in the eyes of the Creator.

Islam continually reminds mankind that man and beast are equal members of the same Creation, and that, one day, each person must answer to Allah for his treatment of animals, his fellow creatures.

It is a obligation required of all Muslims to avoid all actions that – whether intended or not – could cause physical or mental pain or distress to animals or other living things.⁵

Slaughter according to halal does not merely involve the halal cut itself: there are many regulations that must be observed during the process, as well as strict rules for processes that occur before and after. These are designed to spare the animal unnecessary pain during halal slaughter, and uphold his dignity as a fellow creature.⁶ As examples:

- Killing an animal for any purpose other than that of using its meat as a foodstuff is forbidden
- Using animals as targets for shooting practice is forbidden
- Organizing or staging public animal fights is forbidden
- Torturing animals is forbidden
- Branding animals in the face with a branding-iron is forbidden

The handling of animals before halal slaughter must ensure that they are protected from unnecessary pain and suffering.

⁵ The Messenger (s.a.v.) said:

“The man who shows no mercy (in relation to living things), he will receive no clemency (from Allah ta’ala)” (Hadith of Al-Buchari)

“Were you not told that I have cursed those, who branded an animal on the face, or gave it a blow to the face?” (Hadith of Muslim, Abu Dawud, Ahmad and At-Tirmidhi)

⁶ See also the recommendations given in 5.1