Islamic Services of America
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HALAL

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What is Halal
ISA Halal Awareness Overview Training Presentation

Halal Key Elements

- Definition of Halal
- Acceptable Product/Ingredient Sources of Origin
- Types of Halal Products
- Compliance Steps
- Product Reviews
- Facility Audits
- Halal Assurance System

Halal Overview

In Islam, *Halal* is an Arabic term meaning "lawful or permissible" and not only encompasses food and drink, but all matters of daily life. Anything that is "prohibited or forbidden" is called *Haram*.

Most importantly, anything that is generally deemed Halal, must not have any forbidden additives or use forbidden processing aids. The greatest concern is for products containing animal sources of origin or which use alcohol. They must never contain beer, wine or liquor. Ethyl alcohol in levels greater than .05% and in some international markets greater than .01% in the finished products are also forbidden.

Acceptable sources of origin are plant based, microbial, mineral or synthetic prior to any additives being added or processing aids used in their production. Anything from an animal source such as meat or poultry related in its raw or finished form must be Halal certified by ISA or another recognized and accepted Halal certifier.

Product Categories

ISA's Halal product categories include:
- Meat & Poultry
- Bakery and Food Processing
- Dairy, Cheese, Ice Cream
- Vegetables and Fruits
- Flavors and Ingredients
- Oils and Cooking Agents
- Health and Beauty
- Pharmaceuticals, Vitamins and Food Supplements

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- Non-Consumables such as Packaging, Lubricants, Filters, Minerals

Halal Compliance Processes

Halal compliance is achieved through a number of processes which include but are not limited to:
- Halal product and ingredient reviews for approval by ISA
- Review of customer production process flows
- Onsite Halal facility audit inspections (initial and annually thereafter) to ensure segregation is followed for the incoming raw materials (Halal certified or Halal compliant as approved by ISA), during the production process (no commingling of Halal and non Halal ingredients) and during the packaging, labeling and post production storage whereby Halal items are identified, labeled and separated from non Halal items.
- Sanitation, recall and other standard facility documentation and practices are reviewed

Halal Approvals, Audits, Production and Certification

Halal product reviews take place before a client can move forward with Halal production and only after the products have been reviewed can they be formally listed on an ISA Halal certificate.

Halal facility audit inspections must also take place and be audited by ISA Halal QA Auditors according to Halal compliance checklists. Halal checklist criteria and an audit agenda are shared by ISA with customers and acknowledged by their QA team prior to the audit and again completed and confirmed by both parties following the audit.

Halal audits begin with an opening meeting with the identified customer staff (any and all are invited) for an overview about Halal and the planned agenda. Internal customer documentation is then reviewed for the existence and upkeep of standard industry regulations and practices such as HACCP, OSHA, etc. For existing customers and re-audit visits, all Halal documentation materials are also reviewed to ensure the customer has these on record for reference, training and ongoing Halal product and production compliance.

Following a complete facility tour including the incoming material storage areas, production, packaging and finished product storage areas, a closing meeting is conducted for a Q&A and findings review session.

ISA provides ongoing support for its customers relating to Halal compliance practices and ingredient suitability questions. Often, customers continually add more products to their line of Halal certified goods which simply requires providing ISA all ingredient statements and process flow charts for review and approval. ISA QA team members work directly with their customer counterparts for efficient and timely turnarounds. Additional interim Halal facility audit visits are not needed as long as nothing has

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significantly changed in the production facilities or processes. Additional interim site visits are required when new production or storage facilities and new third party toll manufacturers are added.

Halal Assurance System (HAS)

ISA customers are asked and expected to agree to have a Halal Assurance System (HAS) in place. HAS consists of eleven (11) categories which serves as a guideline for Halal compliance and demonstrates the company's commitment to understanding and following general criteria for a Halal program. The HAS document is available from ISA and from the certified customer's QA points of contact and their Halal QA records.

In short, the HAS categories and abbreviated definitions include:

1. **Halal Policy** – The company's ownership and staff understand and agree to follow Halal guidelines.
2. **Halal Management Team** – Identified company staff are assigned as responsible for the Halal program in their facilities.
3. **Training and Education** – The company provides internal Halal overview training to new and existing staff as part of its standard quality and safety standards. ISA annual audits help support these efforts.
4. **Materials** – All raw materials and processing aids are reviewed for Halal compliance with the understanding there must be no forbidden ingredients including pork and alcohol. Ingredient sources of origin must be confirmed and must be Halal certified if from animals.
5. **Product Production** – Finished products must have been reviewed and approved for Halal compliance and production.
6. **Facility** – All facilities handling Halal raw, finished and packaged products must be audited.
7. **Written Procedures for Critical Activities** – Standard documentation and processes must be in place for tracking all Halal certified and/or approved ingredient sourcing/procurement and handling.
8. **Traceability** – Written procedures must exist for Halal production, product coding and recall purposes.
9. **Product Handling for Product That Does Not Meet Criteria**- Non-Halal ingredients must be identified and segregated to avoid cross contamination and use in Halal production.
10. **Internal Audit** – Company must perform internal checks to ensure HAS measures are in place, monitored and maintained with a means to identify and perform corrective measures as needed.
11. **Management Review** – Company management must have a documented process for reviewing internal Halal compliance procedures.

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Facts and FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions)

The opposite of Halal is Haram, which means "unlawful, not permissible or prohibited, but we can sometimes offer alternate solutions for products that contain these items.   The following categories are Haram:

- Alcohol – intoxicants and narcotic drugs

- Blood and blood by-products - blood is the circulatory cleansing fluid of the body and is not to be consumed

- Carnivorous animals, birds of prey, scavengers, and animals improperly slaughtered, sick or dying before slaughter

- Idolatry - any animals or poultry sacrificed for voodoo, witchcraft or practice that denies the existence of the Creator are not to be consumed.

- Swine and all pork by-products and/or their derivatives

- Foods contaminated with any of the above products or with "impurities" (in Arabic, "najis") from processing, such as manure, urine, rodent droppings, infectious fluids, or pus are considered Haram.

Q: Are Halal foods only for persons observing Islamic dietary laws?
A: *No. Anyone can choose to eat Halal or Kosher foods (most of us do eat Kosher foods every day in the form of potato chips, candies and many other standard packaged goods). Aside from being aware of common food allergies to nuts, lactose, gluten etc., consumers can also choose to consume Halal foods without any concerns for health or food safety. Halal certified foods assure consumers that they have undergone careful ingredient reviews thereby making them a healthy choice.*

Q: How do I know if food is Halal?
A: *Reading ingredient content labels is the first step. If you're unfamiliar with the chemical makeup of food additives and preservatives, then you would need to know what their source of origin is to ensure they do not contain non-Halal meat/poultry or alcohol-based ingredients. The best assurance is if the product label is marked with a Halal certification symbol and that the certification is by a known and trusted certifier.*

Q: What are the benefits of ISA Halal certification?
A: *Halal certification benefits not only the consumers who enjoy the consumable products, but it also benefits the manufacturers and producers who can then more easily gain access to global markets where there is a fast-growing demand for quality Halal certified products.*