

McDonald's Animal Health and Welfare

Religious Slaughter Requirements

Introduction

As a consumer facing enterprise, McDonald's strives to meet customer requirements across a wide range of issues – animal health and welfare, quality and food safety, nutrition as well as religious requirements to highlight just a few. McDonald's operating in the Muslim world considers delivering Halal food to its customers an ethical commitment and has been consulting with both the religious and food legislative authorities globally to meet this requirement.

Religious slaughter must conform to the requirements defined by local authority in the country of origin/destination.

The scriptures setting the rules of Islamic diet are:

- "He hath forbidden you carrion, blood, and the swine flesh and that which hath been immolated to any other than Allah" (The Quaran: II – 173).
- "Eat of that over which the Name of Allah hath been mentioned if you are really believers in His revelations" (The Quaran: VI – 119)
- "And eat not of that whereon Allah's Name hath not been mentioned, for lo! it is abomination..." (The Quran: VI – 122).

To meet these requirements, meat must be obtained from cattle or poultry slaughtered by a Muslim slaughter person, using a sharp knife, without stunning and upon which the name of Allah was uttered.

The person performing the slaughter could be a man or woman, and there is no need for the slaughterer to have a religious function provided that certain conditions are met (these are outlined below and are mainly related to the character of the person).

The meat of the cattle or bird slaughtered in this manner acquires a "Halal Identity" and is suitable for consumption by Muslims. Each carton / box is properly marked with the Halal stamp for identification and traceability.

During manufacture and preparation, adequate precautions shall be taken to prevent the contamination (in the religious sense) by non-Halal meat, pork, any traces of alcohol, or shortening containing traces of lard or other animal fats.

A Halal Office approved by the importing Muslim countries will have supervised each batch and certified such an operation and preparation and issued all the required documentation.

Words typically associated with Halal slaughter include:

1. *Halal*: permissible
2. *Haram*: not permissible
3. *Makrooh*: Halal but rather disliked
4. *Mashbooh*: Suspect.

Religious Slaughter and Animal Health and Welfare Assurance

It is often misunderstood that Halal jeopardizes animal health and welfare; this misunderstanding is reinforced by wrong practices. In fact, the two systems are not mutually exclusive. Humane slaughter of animals is recognized in the Halal system.

Islamic scripture instruct that " Allah has ordained excellence on everything; if slaughtering is to be done, do it in the best manner by sharpening the knife and putting the animal to rest" (literally: putting the animal "at ease" to achieve a "good death").

Causing un-necessary pain is unacceptable. The following are examples of animal health and welfare requirements from a Halal perspective. In most European countries, the USA and Australia the animal health and welfare rules have special provisions for ritual slaughters to protect religious freedom.

1. Cattle are taken to the slaughtering location with kindness, pulling animals from the ears, legs, or beating them is not permitted.
2. Live cattle are not to see other cattle being slaughtered.
3. No organs / members are to be cut from live animals. Any piece cut from a live animal is considered carrion and cannot be eaten.
4. Drawing blood from animals for use in food is Haram
5. Knives must be kept sharp all the time.
6. Slaughtering is to be done correctly and quickly to bring about a fast death of the animal.
7. Animals are not shown knives being sharpened.
8. Cattle are not taken out of the restrainer box or shackled and hung on the bleed rail until there is a loss of posture (LOP). Birds are not put into the scald tank until they are dead.

Halal Slaughter Requirements

There are prerequisites for the animals used for Halal food, the slaughter person and supervisors, the equipment used, the facility, the method of slaughter, feed, storage and traceability of the "Halal Identity". These prerequisites are detailed below:

Cattle/poultry pre-slaughter conditions:

1. Must be of the type allowed for Muslim diet.
2. Must have not been fed any type of animal protein, with the exception of feeding fish only based feed to chicken. Poultry meal is prohibited.
3. Cattle/poultry must be healthy, free from any signs of wounds & disease or disfigurement.

Slaughter person

1. The Muslim slaughter person has to be known by the Islamic center and Muslim community for their good character.
2. The slaughter person is licensed by the Islamic center for a renewable one-year period.
3. The slaughter person shall display their Halal Office badge while they are on duty.
4. The slaughter person shall work under the supervision of a Muslim supervisor.
5. The Slaughter person shall observe the abattoir rules; if these rules conflict with the requirements of Halal slaughter, the issue is to be raised to the Muslim supervisor.
6. The Islamic center has the authority to terminate the slaughter person if the Halal system is not adhered to.

Muslim Supervisor

1. The appointed Halal Certification office will provide a list of all registered supervisors, the facility to which they are assigned and a copy of their signatures as it appears on Halal certificates.
2. The Islamic Center will appoint the Muslim supervisor.
3. The Muslim supervisor must have a good understanding of Islam, a good understanding of the Halal system and demonstrate experience in Halal slaughter.
4. The Muslim supervisor shall make routine visits to slaughterhouses and processing plants to monitor the performance of slaughter persons and adherence to the Halal system.
5. The Muslim supervisor must be in contact with his Muslim slaughtermen, slaughterhouses and processing plants, keeping them informed of any changes or to pass their messages to the management of Halal certification.

Halal Certification Office

1. The Halal Certification Office is to be appointed jointly by the supplier and McDonald's local authority on Halal slaughter (or local McDonald's quality assurance representative).
2. McDonald's realizes the importance of proper supervision of Halal slaughter practices. McDonald's seeks to affiliate itself with reputable Halal offices as well as those recognized by the authorities in the exporting country (such as the Australian AQIS)

Slaughter equipment and facility

1. Within the abattoir and further processing facility priority is given to "Halal dedicated" facilities then to "Halal dedicated" lines. If the Halal production is batch oriented along with other non-Halal batches, Halal production will start first in the day right after cleaning. The cleaning procedures taking place in between Halal and non-Halal batches are to be approved by the Muslim supervisor. The Abattoir is not to be used for pork at any time.
2. Dedicated slaughtering knives / tools
 1. They are used only for Halal slaughter
 2. The knife blades are to be kept sharp all the time (This can be verified by determining if the knife is capable of slicing a standard sheet of A4 printer paper when it is held dangling in the air by one corner).
 3.). Halal slaughter knives used for cattle shall be straight, not curved and their length is at least 1½ times the width of the neck of the animal¹
 4. Storage: Should allow for separate storage of Halal and non-Halal equipment.

Cattle - Stun vs. non-stun requirements

Makkah Direction: Prior to slaughter, cattle may be required to be positioned so that the head of the animal is facing Makkah. This practice is desirable but not required by the Sunni Schools of Thought, but compulsory for the Shiaa Schools of Thought. The slaughter person must intend to make a slaughter.

Invocation of the name of God: The phrase "Bismillah, Allahu Akbar", is to be uttered immediately before the act of slaughter (meaning: in the Name of God, The Great).

Whenever legally allowed and acceptable to the Halal authority of the exporting/importing country, McDonald's requires the use of non-penetrative stunning (pneumatic mushroom stunner) for cattle. If a pneumatic mushroom stunner is not acceptable:

1. Use head only electrical stunning,
2. If head only electrical stunning is not permitted, Use an upright standing box with head lift, following design and construction guidelines developed by Dr. Temple Grandin²

¹ Grandin Temple, Internal Communication, Letter dated July 8, 2001.

² See Dr. Temple Grandin Website; www.grandin.com

In the event that the exporting/importing country forbids stunning of any type, a standing box or other device that holds the animal in a comfortable upright position shall be used in such a way that the animal is held in an upright position. The animal must not be removed from the restrainer until it has lost consciousness (verified by LOP – loss of posture). Dr. Temple Grandin suggests that with the proper tools and good training of the Halal slaughter person, the animal slaughtered in upright position should collapse almost immediately³.

For animals slaughtered in a standing box:

1. LOP (loss of posture) must be observed within 30 seconds for 90% of the cattle slaughtered using this method,
2. LOP (loss of posture) must be observed within 60 seconds for 100% of cattle slaughtered using this method within 60 seconds of the neck cut.
3. Cattle must be stunned using a mushroom type stunner at 61 seconds if LOP has not been achieved.
4. In a well-designed and operated standing box, 5% or less of the cattle will vocalize (moo or bellow). When there are problems, the percentage of cattle that vocalize in the box will double or quadruple. Vocalization scoring during handling and restraint is an objective indicator of stress and discomfort in cattle. If the percentage of cattle that vocalizes exceeds 5% of the animals, there is a problem that must be corrected.

The use of a restraining device that turns the animal onto its back (rotating box) is an unacceptable method to handle conscious animals. Rotating a live animal whose meat is destined for the McDonald's supply chain is strictly prohibited. Violation will result in immediate facility suspension.

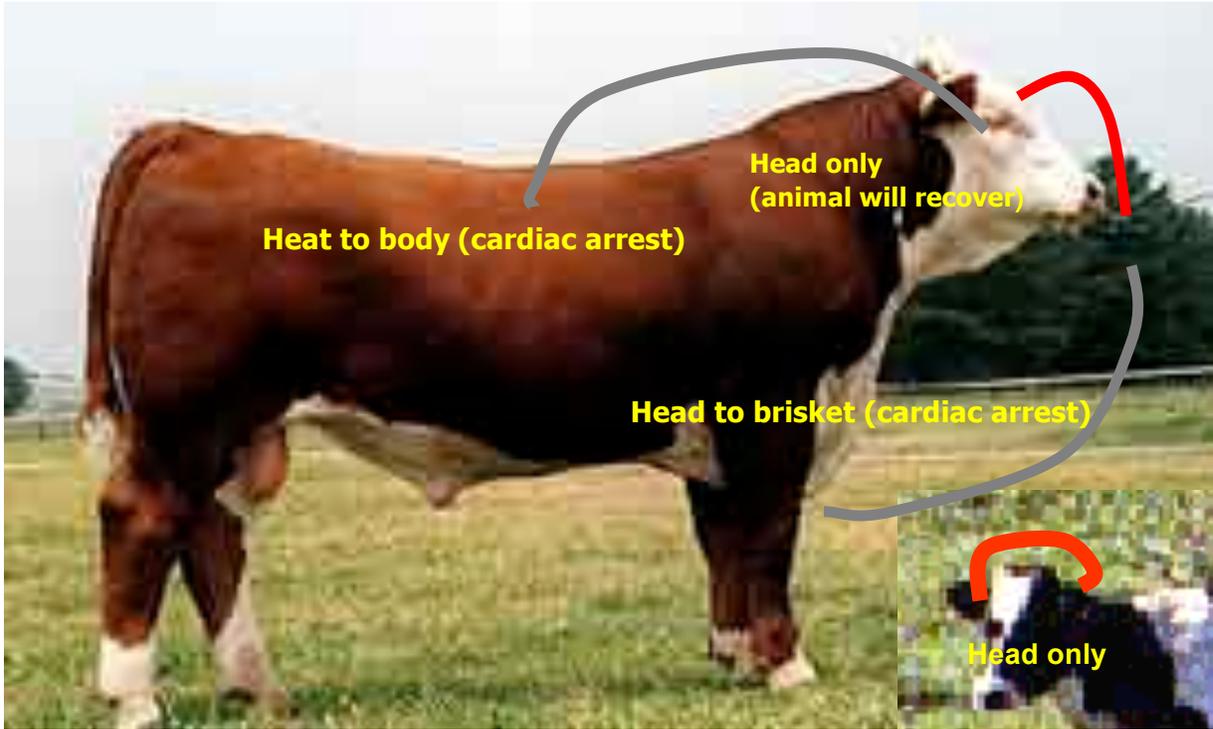
Under no circumstances should live cattle be shackled and hung upside down, or knocked to the floor and then cut. This is a violation of McDonald's animal health and welfare policy and if observed will result in immediate facility suspension.

When allowed by Halal authority, it is conditional and must result in a non-lethal stun. The definition of a non-lethal stun is the animal would regain "sensitivity" if left alone for a period of time. For cattle, penetrating captive bolt, pithing and the use of gas mixtures are prohibited as these methods result in a non-reversible stun (not possible for the animal to regain sensitivity).

A new stunning technology called the Pneumatic Percussive Stunning is allowed in Malaysia. When compared to the common mushroom stunner, the pneumatic percussive stunner allows the operator to set air pressure combined with a larger stunner head enabling better control of placement. This modification results in a reduction of cracked skulls. According to Malaysian Standard MS 1500-2004, cattle with a cracked skull, which would result in death due to skull damage, renders the cattle non Halal.

³ Meeting with Dr. Grandin, June 9, 2003 – Colorado State University.

Head-to-body electrical stunning is not allowed since it causes cardiac arrest (the heart stop beating) and permanent insensibility of the animal. **Head-only low current electrical stunning is acceptable in the Arabian Gulf countries⁴ provided that it is non-lethal. In this region, the mushroom stunner is not acceptable**, Malaysian standards require that the stunned animal should recover from the stun as evidence by trying to regain posture within 5 minutes of stunning⁵



Schematic for Electrical Stunning Operations (Source: Dr Mustafa Farouk
2nd International Halal Conference, Johannesburg, South Africa July 16, 2007)

While it is recognized that stunning is generally not allowed by Islamic Schools of Thought, when deemed acceptable by the local Halal Office, the use of non-lethal head only electrical stunning may be used, where both electrodes are placed on the head. The strength of the current used and length of application should be controlled by the certifying office along with the attending veterinarian in charge of animal welfare. The Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC) Halal Draft of June 2008 specifies the electrical stunning parameters to be used for a number of species as per the following table.

⁴ These countries are Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain & Oman and they have established one standard known as the "Gulf Standard".

⁵ Malaysian Halal Standards.

Guideline Parameters for Electrical Stunning

Type of animal	Current (Ampere)	Duration(Second)
Chicken	0,25-0,50	3,00-5,00
Lamb	0,50-0,90	2,00-3,00
Goat	0,70-1,00	2,00-3,00
Sheep	0,70-1,20	2,00-3,00
Calf	0,50-1,50	3,00
Steer	1,50-2,50	2,00-3,00
Cow	2,00-3,00	2,50-3,50
Bull	2,50-3,50	3,00-4,00

The slaughter person should sever the esophagus, the trachea and the jugular veins. The spinal cord should not be cut and therefore the head is not completely severed until the bleeding has stopped. It is preferable that the cut is done only once, however, the “se-saw action” ,if necessary, is allowed provided the slaughter person does not lift his hand to avoid multiple cuts which is painful to the animal. Non sharp knives would cause tearing of the tissue and pain to the animal.

Poultry

McDonald's requires procedures to be used that minimize the pain of birds slaughtered using “religious slaughter” techniques where restrictions on stunning birds prior to the neck cut are prescribed by religious requirements (requirements that may vary from market to market and between Halal and Kosher).

The core requisite of religious slaughter is that birds are alive at the moment of slaughter. Death must occur from the slaughter process (neck cut) and the rapid loss of blood, and not from brain damage or cardiac arrest. As such, to ensure good animal welfare, the slaughter method must enable maximum and efficient blood loss to induce quick death and minimal suffering. Where religious requirements exist, they generally fall into one of two scenarios:

1. No stunning is allowed – This method requires the bird's neck vessels be cut by a trained slaughter person following applicable ritual procedures (prayer). Cut birds are then bled prior to scalding.
2. Reversible stunning – The method permits birds to be stunned using low current electrical stun systems prior to ritual slaughter. This method requires that as the result of the electrical stun, cardiac arrest is not achieved (the heart remains beating). Stunned birds must be able to “revive” after stunning. In certain Halal markets, the local religious authority may require verification of this by removing a number of birds from the line to confirm that these birds are able to regain consciousness.

Through the global Animal Health and Welfare team, the following standards for religious slaughter have been established for poultry:

- Personnel responsible for assessing proper religious slaughter must be able to evaluate and recognize signs of improperly slaughtered birds regardless of the religious practice used. Only trained and competent personnel are to be involved in the religious slaughter process ensuring all birds are humanely processed.
- Where reversible stunning is permitted, signs of an effective reversible stun should be present. If a reversible stun is effective and the bird is unconscious and insensible to pain post-stun, the bird will show that following signs: (Note that the following criteria are indicators, but not all criteria need to be evident)
 - No rhythmic breathing for 8-10 seconds after leaving the water bath
 - Neck arched with head directed vertically
 - Open eyes
 - No reaction to comb pinch
 - Wings held tightly to the body
 - Rigidly extended legs (not an appropriate indicator when a bird is held in a shackle) constant body tremors
- To enable rapid blood loss and subsequent rapid death, at the same time meeting applicable religious requirements (Halal or Kosher), both carotid arteries, jugular veins, the trachea and the esophagus must be severed.
- Birds must be bled out/dead before entering the scald tank. A best practice is a minimum of 90 seconds between the neck cutting and the scald tank entrance to ensure birds are dead before entering the scald tank.
- In countries where stunning poultry is not allowed, use of inverted cones are required to facilitate rapid blood loss after the ritual slaughter while limiting movement and thus injury.

The following audit criteria will be used in facilities performing religious slaughter for McDonald's:

1. Verify that all slaughter persons have received training specific to the type of slaughter practiced at the facility being audited by matching training records with individuals performing the slaughter. For example, being able to effectively cut both carotid arteries and the pertinent vessels.
2. In a sample size of 300 birds verify that there is 100% slaughter efficiency evidence by birds that display the classic signs of insensibility due to rapid blood loss achieved by properly severing both of the carotid arteries, both of the jugular veins, the trachea and esophagus. Verify that equipment allows a minimum of 90 seconds between the neck cut and the scald tank to enable sufficient blood loss and death to occur.
3. Verify that knife washing, sanitizing and sharpening facilities are provided and accessible to all slaughter persons.
4. Where stunning is not practiced for religious reasons, verify the facility adopts an effective means to enable rapid blood loss of cut birds while minimizing injury by restricting birds movement.
5. Uncut live birds entering the scald tank is a category 1 audit failure resulting in audit failure and discontinuation of raw material supply. The facility is required to be re-audited by a recognized authority on AH&W that meets with McDonald's Quality Assurance approval, to review the corrective action plan and verify that the plan is adequate to address the failure.

Feed

This is another emerging concern for Halal Assurance. Saudi food legislation requires that animals are to be fed according to their natural species; as such protein based feed is not allowed from a Halal standpoint. The United Arab Emirates Legislation made an exception for poultry meal provided that it is a Halal by-product and has been treated in rendering plant without coming into contact with non-Halal by products. Dry blood is not allowed at any time nor is pork by-products. Fish based feed is however

allowed. The McDonald's Quality Assurance Department Europe feed policy does not allow the use of MBM and poultry meal but allows the use of fish only based feed.

Halal Identity preservation: Halal Critical Points (HCP's)

HCP's are any identified points within the operation, preparation and processing of Halal meat that might otherwise lead to the loss of Halal identity and ultimately the condemnation of the product. In the case of processed meat, if the HCP's were not observed, it would result in the alteration (in the religious sense) of Halal meat with non-Halal meat. A Halal CP Plan (similar to a HACCP plan) should be put in place with the help of the Halal officer, the plan should identify the HCP's along with their corrective actions, some of the CP's may lead to the loss of Halal identity and the product becomes "*Haram*" (non-Halal) for Muslims to eat. Other CP's may lead to "*Makrooh*" (disliked) or "*Mashbooh*" (suspect) situations; these do not violate the product's Halal integrity but are to be avoided. The following is a list of potential HCP's.

1. Receiving – Feed documents check
2. Facility Cleaning: Separation of Halal & non- Halal processing
3. Makkah direction
4. Stunning: Cattle/poultry is alive after stunning; most critical requirement.
5. Slaughter

Halal Traceability and Halal Certificates

For a meat shipment to be considered officially Halal, it should be accompanied by a Halal certificate issued by an approved Islamic Center. Ideally, Halal certificates consist of the following:

1. The name and address of the Islamic Center:
2. In case the raw materials are sourced from another company, the needed information and support documents should be in place to trace the identity of the Halal during audits.
3. A Halal seal, displaying the word Halal and the name of the Islamic Center that issued it. Because the seal will be used to stamp boxes and cartons, the name Allah should not be include on the seal.
4. The name and signature of both the Muslim supervisor and the slaughter person.
5. Details of the meat shipment. For example: type of meat - is the Halal certificate for carcasses or meat products, does it show quantity, weight and date of slaughtering (for carcasses) or date of processing (for meat products)
6. Name and address of the exporter, importer, slaughterhouse or processing plant.
7. A serial number. The serial number of the Halal certificate can be used for Halal Traceability audits. A list of certificate serial numbers and date of issue should be made available for routine auditing purposes.
8. "Non-Halal" decisions are to be documented, this refers to animals which may die as a result of stunning before they get slaughtered
9. Feed traceability information should be made available during routine audits. This is now being incorporated in the audit (SAI-Global) for the Middle East countries.

In the Pattie Processing Plant

1. The meat to be processed into meat products must initially be Halal, has originally been supervised by an approved Islamic Center, and carry a Halal certificate.
2. The processing plant will provide the Muslim supervisor with all ingredients and whether they are of animal or vegetable origin.
3. All Halal ingredients and Halal meat products should be stored in a specified area.

Halal Compliance

While it is the responsibility of the Halal certifying authority to supervise the Halal operation, it is ultimately the responsibility of McDonald's supplier to see that the Halal Assurance System is implemented to the satisfaction of McDonald's. If any of the Halal system rules mentioned above, have, for any reason, been violated or jeopardized, the Halal certification office of the Islamic Center in agreement with McDonald's has the authority and full power to withdraw the company's right for obtaining necessary Halal certificate until corrective actions are taken. If local legislation conflicts in any way with the above requirements, then the matter must be communicated to McDonald's.