

# A Guide to Halal Food



## Halal Food Preparation & Supervision

The following is intended as a guide to help Food and Function caterers and co-ordinators understand the special dietary requirements of their Muslim clients and guests.

### What does Halal mean?

- Halal is an Arabic word, meaning lawful, and is the Islamic dietary law that identifies food permitted for Muslims.
- Non-halal is also referred to in Arabic as Haram (*meaning not permissible*)
- **Alcohol and pork** and all products containing or derived from products are NOT permitted including pork lard, ham and bacon.
- For processed foods to be Halal, they must be free of alcohol and pork, and must not have come into contact with either pork or alcohol during the manufacturing or preparation process.
- For meat and poultry to be Halal it must be slaughtered according to Islamic guidelines.
- Food cannot touch or be contaminated in the transport, storage or preparation process with pork, alcohol or meat that has not been slaughtered in accordance with Islamic law.
- The Halal logo  or the Halal symbol  indicates that only Halal certified products are contained in the product.

### Where can I get Halal meat?

- Butchers: There are several authorized butchers in and around Brisbane that supply Halal meat. In recent times some Coles and Woolworths supermarkets are stocking halal meat products.
- Pre-packaged meat: Chicken from certain suppliers are Halal certified.

### What precautions must I take during the food preparation?

- All utensils, crockery, glass, serving dishes and food preparation surfaces must be thoroughly cleaned before use.
- Halal meat should be purchased from an authorised Halal butcher.
- Ensure that the Halal and non-Halal meat are separate and do not come into contact with each.
- A separate surface work area, chopping board and knife should be used for HALAL MEAT AND PRODUCTS ONLY and should be thoroughly cleaned before use.
- Make sure you can tell between the Halal meat and the non-Halal by labelling them or by putting on different storage and work surfaces etc.
  
- Never cook Halal and non-Halal meat in the same container.
- If possible, cook Halal meat in a separate oven to non-Halal.
- If separate ovens are not available, Halal meat should be cooked in a separate container to non-Halal, and the Halal meat should be on the upper shelf with the non-Halal on the lower shelf to avoid contamination with cooking juices.
- Once it's been cooked, keep the Halal meat and Halal dishes away from non-Halal meat and dishes and make sure that they are easily identified.
- Layout on the counter should ensure that Halal meat is completely separate from non-Halal dishes.

- Halal dishes SHOULD BE CLEARLY IDENTIFIED so not to cause confusion with the non-Halal dishes.
- Separate serving utensils should be used and retained for Halal meat and Halal products only.
- Use vegetable oil when frying any food such as chips, spring rolls, etc.
- Do not cook or serve any food that has had alcohol (such as beer or wine) added to it (however little the quantity).
- Ensure salads do not contain any non-Halal meat, pork or dressings containing alcohol and that the cheese used is Halal.
- Take extra care to ensure that all the Halal food does not make even accidental contact with non-Halal food through mixing utensils, spillages and drops. Once such contact has been made the food cannot thereafter be consumed by Muslims under any circumstances.
- Foods containing **Gelatine** derived from non halal meat products is not permissible. Vegetable and halal gelatine options are available.
- Kindly ensure that staff at your facility are aware of these requirements and sensitive to the needs of their clients, very much like patrons with other needs like Vegan or Kosher.

### **Are there any special requirements when it comes to non-meat products?**

- Fruit, vegetables, dairy products, grains/cereals, herbs and spices are Halal.
- If making sandwiches, avoid any butter substitutes made with rendered beef fat. The label will indicate use of such fat.
- Avoid the following E numbers as they are non-vegetarian: E120 Cochineal; E441 Gelatine; E542 Edible Bone Phosphate. Some other e number substances can also be produced from animal sources.
- Any biscuits provided should contain no animal fats other than butter. Also check the label to ensure that cochineal has not been used in their production as this is not vegetarian.
- Food items should not contain gelatine (unless it is of a vegetarian variety).
- Alcohol should not be used in the preparation of any food.
- No animal fat should be used in any cooking, and when cheese is used it should be of the kind labelled 'vegetarian' which indicates that it has not been made with rennet which comes from cows' stomachs.
- Potato chips that may have beef tallow in the preparation are NOT permitted.

### **How do I serve non-halal and Halal food at the same venue?**

- Where no special arrangements have been made to cater for halal meat, Muslims are generally happy to eat vegetarian food that has no animal fat or by-products used in its production.
- Most fish dishes are also permissible, provided there is no contamination with other non-Halal products or cooked in BEER batter.
- If non-halal meat and fish dishes or sandwiches are provided as part of a meal, ensure that they are on separate platters and label them to avoid confusion.
- Where alcoholic drinks are being served ensure that they kept separate from the non-alcoholic ones.
- If using an external caterer for an event, underline that any meat and fish items must be served on completely separate platters.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

If you have any further concerns kindly discuss with your Muslim guest or client