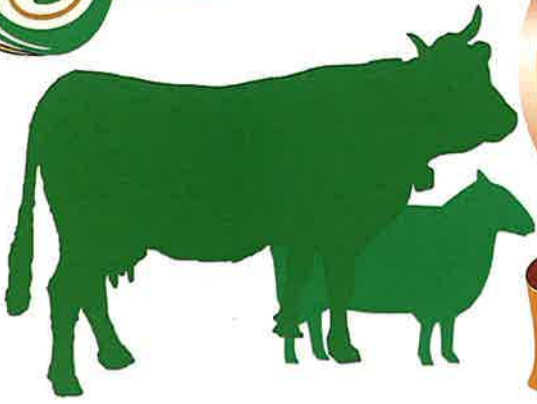


WHAT IS HALAAL



Halaal is an Arabic word meaning lawful or permitted. The opposite of Halaal is Haraam, which means unlawful or prohibited. Halaal and Haraam are universal terms that apply to all facets of life, from the words we speak to money and loans. However, it is with food and the slaughter of animals with which most people tend to associate the terms 'Halaal' and 'Haraam'.

Say, "I do not find in the revelations given to me any food that is prohibited for any eater except: carrion (animals that die of themselves), running blood, the meat of pigs, for it is contaminated, and the meat of animals blasphemously dedicated to other than God." [Qur'aan 6:145]

The Halaal method of slaughtering

In terms of food, Halaal and Haraam can apply to what kind of animal is used and the way they are slaughtered. Islamic law states that animals must be killed in the quickest and most painless way. The animal must be healthy, should be placed in a comfortable position facing the Qiblah (the Muslim direction of prayer) and the butcher must make a recitation dedicating it to Allah (God) whilst the jugular vein, carotid artery and windpipe are cut with a single swipe from a sharp knife.

The animal dies immediately and the blood drains away.

Inhumane?

The Islamic practice of slaughtering animals has frequently come under attack by some groups as being cruel. It is claimed that Halaal slaughter is a painful and inhumane method of killing animals. In most Western countries it is required by law to stun the animals to render the animal unconscious and prevent it from reviving before it is slaughtered.

Other Faiths

The Halaal method of slaughter is not confined to Islam alone. The Jewish faith also follows the very same principles when slaughtering animals for Kosher meat. It is a long held belief of both faiths that the method described above is the most painless method of slaughtering animals.

Treatment of animals in Islam

In Islam, the Qur'an and Hadith (sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him) give clear guidance on several matters concerning animals, from their roles in this world to the correct method of slaughter for food. As a Muslim, one must follow strict guidelines. In the Qur'an and Hadith it is emphasized that animals must be treated as humanely as any other of God's vast creation. The Qur'an states that cruelty to animals is equivalent to cruel treatment of a human being.

Whatever the case, animals are beautiful creations from Allah (God) and should be treated as such. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) repeatedly forbade cruelty to animals and said;

"Whoever is kind to the creatures of God is kind to himself." (Bukhari)

Scientific Evidence

Many scientific assessments on methods of slaughter have concluded that the Halaal/Kosher methods of slaughter were the least painful and most healthy methods. One European study by Professor Wilhelm Schulze and his colleague Dr. Hazim at the School of Veterinary Medicine, Hannover University in Germany undertook a study to determine the level of pain experienced by animals subjected to the different methods of slaughter. They concluded that the Halaal method of slaughter is the most humane and painless method of slaughter and that captive bolt stunning, practiced in the West, causes severe pain to the animal.

حلال