
MODEL ANSWER FOR AGRICULTURE AND HORTICULTURE DEVELOPMENT BOARD CONSULTATION: QUALITY STANDARD FOR HALAL SHEEPMEAT

You can access the consultation document here:

<http://www.qsmbeefandlamb.co.uk/halal>

Please return submission to: halal@ahdb.org.uk

Marketing

Would your business use the Halal Quality Standard Mark?

No

If yes, which mark would be utilised?

N/A

Are there any other specific areas of marketing support that would prove beneficial?

I am pleased that the AHDB's proposed quality marks include a provision for the labelling of non-stunned halal meat. Such labelling is important as there is evidence that a large proportion of non-stunned halal meat is entering the general meat market unlawfully and without consumers being able to tell whether the animal was pre-stunned or slaughtered whilst still fully conscious. I support the reduction of animal suffering resulting from human behaviour and see compassionate attitudes to animal suffering as a hallmark of a humane society. As such I believe non-stunned slaughter to be inhumane. Therefore, I believe that I should be able to make a choice as to whether to buy and consume products in line with my beliefs and that this can only meaningfully be achieved through the introduction of labels for meat that clearly indicate the method of slaughter.

However, the current designs proposed for these labels are inadequate. The central point of introducing this labelling system is to bring ease and clarity to consumers. But very few consumers under the current proposals would be able to tell the two labels apart or know what they were intended to signify. Both labels say the same thing - 'Halal Assured' - and neither actually states the method of slaughter. This wording is pointless: even Muslims will be confused and probably not realise there is a difference between the two labels. As to the general public who want to know whether the animal was humanely slaughtered or not, the labels will seem entirely irrelevant. The consultation makes it clear that the words 'stun / with pre-stunning' will not be used on the labels and that information on slaughter practices will be 'detailed in sub-branding' - with no further information on what this will mean in practice. I believe that the best way to display this information, so that it is of best use to consumers, is in the primary branding and specifically detailed clearly and using wording on the label.