

POULTRY - A USA TRUMP CARD

Whilst presidential hopeful Donald Trump campaigns vigorously for the White House leadership with many promises amongst which is the banning of Muslims entering into the United States of America, the administration that he hopes to lead has for years been in the forefront of strenuous exports of poultry to the world and for Muslims.

The US is amongst the world's largest poultry producer, a formidable juggernaut with ultra-modern production systems and a large population which on poultry meat consumes five times more white meat than the dark variety. This allows producers to target developing export markets such as South Africa to dump the cheap unwanted surplus at prices that local producers could never even dream of matching given our high cost of feed, electricity and fuel.

This situation is given further traction by lobbyists to an administration who have no hesitation in flexing their muscle to advance their national interests. In the case of South Africa where chicken is the most consumed protein, attempts were made with legislation via punitive anti-dumping duties to protect the local industry. However, with threats of exclusion from the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) which would have jeopardised the duty free entry into the US of products of the Republic such as cars, chemicals, citrus fruits, textiles, wine and nuts etc. our government chickened out to open the floodgate of chickens to our shores. Already several plants have closed down and a reported 6000 workers have lost their jobs.

In consolidating its position as a poultry leader the industry also utilises slick promotional campaigns to win the hearts and minds of chicken consumers. This includes jetting in specially selected foreign journalists as guests to influence opinions

back in their respective home markets. That is what happened very recently when a Cape Town journalist of the online media house Fin 24 was flown out as a guest of the USA Poultry and Egg Export Council.

Like the proverbial cock crowing at dawn to wake his master, the Fin 24 journalist predictably filed three sunny side up stories in quick succession. In one the praise singer extolled the virtues of the high standards of the USA poultry, in another, he articulates his host the President of the USA Poultry & Egg Export Council's attack on South Africa's "**Botox**" poultry and in the other he proclaimed that the products were Halaal. More seriously the article falsely declared that the American certification body was recognised by **SANHA** thereby creating the impression that we had approved their Halaal status. The journalist failed to follow the fundamental rule of his profession i.e. verification of information which he ought to have known as it is also enshrined in the Noble Quraan in Chapter 49 Verse 26 where we are commanded, "**O you who believe! If a transgressor brings you news, verify it lest you harm a people in ignorance. You will then be regretful about what you did.**"

Worse still our demand for an apology was not met. Instead Fin 24 amended its article without mentioning that it had been corrected; made no indication of apology for the error in either the original or the follow-up article which incidentally was removed after a few hours and implied that the false claim was solely the responsibility of the US producer, whereas it was the media house's journalist who had stated the claim as fact without verification in the first instance.

We wish to state unequivocally that at no stage **SANHA** had approved of chickens from the USA or have had any discussions with any Halaal organisation despite this

"ambush by association" journalism. Poultry produced in the USA is almost without exception machine-slaughtered, which method is also prevalent in most developed countries of Europe and South America. **SANHA** categorically rejects machine-slaughter as it cannot meet the following conditions:

- i. The act of slaughter must be rendered physically by a Muslim person.
- ii. The Tasmiyah (recitation of God's name) must be mentioned over every bird during slaughter.
- iii. The required vessels viz trachea, oesophagus, the jugular veins and carotid artery must be severed.
- iv. Machine slaughter devoid of human conscience cannot be relied upon to fulfil these requirements.

Our stance on non-acceptability of machine-slaughtered poultry is consistent on local and imported products. We do not reject it for locally approved abattoirs on one hand and quietly issue certificates for imported products as emerged some years ago in a television exposé documentary.

Furthermore, during our inspections of such plants abroad, huge inadequacies and weaknesses in their **"Halaal"** programmes were noted. It is impossible to exercise stringent monitoring and audit control without having the required trained and dedicated authorized Muslim monitors onsite, in addition to impromptu spot audits as we do locally. **SANHA** therefore will not give approval based on the presentation of a **"Halaal Certificate"** per shipment as was alluded to in the Fin24 article.

A serious difficulty is the fact that it becomes impossible for the Muslim consumer to identify the products since these are brought in as portions and sold to industry for further processing, without the benefit of any labelling on the end product. These items could surface as portions of fried chicken at take outs, meals at restaurants, processed meats such as polony, and cuts from your butcher or retailer.

CONSUMPTION OF POULTRY IS NO PALTRY MATTER – SAFEGUARD YOUR IMAAN BY FOLLOWING THE HALAAL BODY THAT YOU HAVE CONFIDENCE IN.

Any queries pertaining to the above or any other aspect of Halaal may be referred to our offices

Halaal Helpline 0861 786 111