



10 Questions when

Selecting your Halaal Certifying Body

Though at times misunderstood, the role of a Halaal certifying body is both crucial and paramount. Moreover this role becomes mandatory where Muslims live in a minority situation. It acts as a facilitator between compliance and obedience to Islamic law which is the main concern of every practicing Muslim.

For the consumer, the benefits of halaal certification is the assurance that the product is Halaal-certified by a reputable, trustworthy organisation that will not pander to any vested interest. They can purchase the product with the satisfaction that it does not contain anything that is Haraam (forbidden) or doubtful.

The producer too derives obvious benefits such as expert reviewing of products, ingredients, preparation, processing, hygiene, sanitation procedures and the general supervision and monitoring of the supply chain. The certification provides an independent third party quality assurance step valued by conscientious consumers and a leverage into the burgeoning global Halaal market. In fact the Halaal aspect is now being accepted as a quality system worldwide that appeals to both Muslims and non-Muslims as well. A demonstration of this was New Zealand becoming the first non-Muslim country to win the service provider award at the World Halal Forum in Malaysia recently.

With globalization and flow of goods into countries, advances in sciences in the preservation of foods requiring use of enzymes and new technologies, consumers cannot rely on product names, reputations and ingredient listings couched in "trade linguistics" for Halaal assurances. Government departments have their own respective functions and mandates on regulations most of which do not include Halaal certification. It is a hazardous minefield of complexities requiring knowledge and expertise at a high level.

Fraudsters too are becoming more sophisticated in their methods as uncovered recently when the High court of South Africa ruled in favour of SANHA's legal action preventing an unscrupulous company falsely labelling and selling pork, kangaroo, buffalo meat and poultry as Halaal despite their claims of certification by another body.

Therefore the role of a Halaal certifying body cannot be emphasized enough. There are literally hundreds of certifying organizations worldwide serving their respective communities. SANHA welcomes them all in the service of Islam and is committed to teach and learn from them.

In exercising your freedom of choice in selecting your Halaal service provider, a critical examination of the integrity of the organization, the bona fides of its membership, its track record, sincerity, dedication and integrity of its officials will help with your choice.

The following are ten fundamental questions for your evaluation:

- **Is Halaal certification the only dedicated activity of the organization and any income derived is ploughed back into this activity?**
- **Does the organization hold Annual General Meetings open to the public and has one been held in the last 12 months?**
- **Does it publish its licensing fee structure and audited financial statements for public viewing?**
- **Does it publish its list of all Halaal certified establishments together with their contact details?**
- **Does its Executive and Management reflect a strong Theological foundation and broad representation?**
- **Does it have logistical support in all regions where it issues Halaal certification?**
- **Is it easily accessible to the consumer and responds timeously on their queries?**
- **Does it keep all stake holders regularly informed via publications, radio, meetings and Ulama feedbacks.**
- **Is it aligned at a Global level with other International Halaal certification bodies?**
- **Does it have a record of pursuing and taking action against fraudulent practices and misuse of the term Halaal?**

GO FOR THE PERFECT 10

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