



Flash News

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WHERE IS YOUR BREAD BUTTERED?

Bread is the most universal food on Earth. It has been with man since the dawn of time and is one of the oldest prepared foods. The world's oldest evidence of bread-making using wild wheat was found at an ancient prehistoric site in Jordan. Leavened bread was baked as early as 6000 BC by the Sumerians, who may have passed on their knowledge to the Egyptians around 3000 BC. They in turn refined the process and added yeast to the flour. The reference to bread in Egypt is also mentioned in the Noble Quraan where in Chapter 12 Verse 36 it is stated, ***"...Indeed, I have seen myself carrying upon my head [some] bread, from which the birds were eating. Inform us of its interpretation; indeed, we see you to be of those who do good."***

Throughout history, bread in its plethora of forms which include breads, rolls, cookies, pies, pastries, muffins, artisanal breads etc. has been food we rely on for nutrition, survival, celebration, ritual, economics and even politics where it has been a trigger for revolutions. It has even become part of our lexicon where we talk of a breadwinner, breaking bread, man cannot live by bread alone, to earn one's daily bread, below the breadline, etc. to name a few.

SOUTH AFRICA

Planting and harvesting wheat to produce bread is one of the oldest branches of commercial agriculture in South Africa, beginning soon after the earliest Dutch settlers arrived at the Cape in the 17th century. The industry was given impetus with the arrival of immigrants between 1900 and 1914.

Today, bread is a staple of most South African diets and is the second most important source of energy after maize products. Baked in about 5000 bakeries and over 600 supermarkets, it is available in almost every food store and cafe in the country. The industry produces over 2 Billion loaves of bread annually. It is a credit to their advanced manufacturing technologies and standards of food safety that bread on our table is fresh and safe to consume.

It is no wonder that the first President of our liberated and democratically elected government in 1994, Nelson Mandela in his inaugural speech stated, ***"Let there be work, bread, water and salt for all."***

Amongst industry bodies representing this important sector is **the South African Chamber of Baking (SACB)** which was established in 1938 and is a not-for-profit organisation. They promote all sectors of the bakery industry, especially training, and lobby government forums on behalf of its members. SACB is hosting its 84th Annual General Meeting in Pretoria early next month where **SANHA** as a proud member of the chamber will be delivering an address on the importance of Halaal in relation to this industry category. To know more of their activities, membership etc. click here:

<https://www.sacb.co.za/>

HALAAL CERTIFICATION

In a bygone era when bread making involved a few simple ingredients derived naturally, the need for Halaal Certification was perhaps not required.

However, with evolution to mass production with additives for longer shelf life, nutrient fortification, emulsification, colouring, etc. in addition to globalisation, ensuring the Halaal status of breads became a minefield of complexities. It is more than just a bread and butter issue with all of baking coming under the spotlight for the following reasons;

- Ingredients / premixes used may contain improvers such as L-cysteine which is commonly derived from human hair.
- Pan greases may not be Halaal compliant due to incorporation of natural animal fats.
- Possible use of animal fats, such as lard (rendered pig fat), for glazing or greasing purposes. The pig is labelled by Shari'ah (Islamic law) as 'najisul ain' i.e. a core impurity, usage of which is forbidden and thus avoided by Muslims.
- Contamination with Haraam (non-Halaal) meat products in storage, handling, preparation and processing poses a huge risk. This is exacerbated by staff bringing in non-Halaal food in the processing area.
- Natural bristle (pig hair) basting brushes are commonly used in bakeries.
- Possible use of brandy, sherry and other liquors in certain confectionery products and flavour components.
- Gelatine derived from non-Halaal slaughtered animals is sometimes used as a stabiliser and aerating agent in mousses, cheesecakes, other desserts and even in fresh and sour whipped creams. Click here for explanation on gelatine: <https://sanha.co.za/flashnews/2020/flashn154.html>
- Some colourants, such as carmine, (also known as - E120, carminic acid, CI 75470, natural red 4 and crimson lake) are non-Halaal. Carmine, for example, is derived from the crushing of the female cochineal beetle and its babies (nymphs).

SANHA certifies approximately 3000 establishments amongst whom are numerous bakeries, flour mills, home industries, pie manufacturers, pizza outlets and restaurants as well as suppliers of baking requisites, food flavourings, additives manufacturers, biscuit, snack and confectionery manufacturers.

LET US HELP YOU ROLL IN THE DOUGH

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

Halaal Helpline 0861 786 111