

April 2024



CANADA BEEF

PREMIUM QUALITY
GRAIN-FED
CANADIAN BEEF

HALAL AND THE CFIA BEEF WATCH REPORT FOR APRIL 2024

HALAL

HALAL AND THE REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS OF THE CANADIAN FOOD INSPECTION AGENCY (CFIA).

This edition of Beef Watch focuses on the meat obtained by the ritual slaughter practice known as Halal and the regulatory requirements enforced by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA).

HALAL BEEF

Halal is an Arabic word translated as “permissible” or “allowed.” When it comes to meat, it refers to meat that is prepared according to the Islamic dietary laws of the Holy Quran. ⁽¹⁾

The requirements of Halal beef include the sacrifice and blessing in the name of Allah by a trained Muslim who bleeds out the animal with a sharp knife. There are four elements in the animal that must be cut at the time of slaughter; 1) the throat 2) the oesophagus 3) the two jugular veins. According to the Ulama (religious scholars), stunning which causes death prior to bleeding is not accepted in Islam. There is some variation in the requirements related to stunning by different Halal monitoring authorities.

REGULATIONS FOR RITUAL SLAUGHTER IN CANADA

The regulatory requirements for animal welfare, (including halal ritual slaughter practices), are included in the Safe Food for Canadians Regulations (SFCR) enforced by the CFIA.

Trained CFIA personnel audit the meat process to ensure compliance with animal welfare requirements. The SFCR prohibits the suspension of animals on the slaughter line unless they are unconscious. The regulations apply to both: ritual slaughter and non-ritual slaughter activities. The CFIA's Guidelines for Ritual Slaughter without Pre-slaughter stunning describe the need to develop a Preventive Control Plan (PCP) with an effective system to manage animal welfare risks. ⁽²⁾

In 2016, the CFIA started enforcing new halal labelling and advertising requirements to prevent fraud and misleading advertisements. All halal claims must include the name of the recognized organization or person that certified it as halal.

ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE OF THE HALAL MARKET

According to Canada's 2021 census, nearly five per cent of Canadians are Muslim, with increasing immigration being a key driver of this growth. Statistics Canada data shows that almost 19 per cent of immigrants admitted between 2011 and 2021 are Muslim. ⁽³⁾ The estimated Annual value of the halal market in Canada is approximately \$1 billion. ⁽⁴⁾

HALAL CERTIFICATION IN CANADA

In Canada, key organizations support food companies interested in the process that is required to obtain a valid Halal Certification for their products.

The Halal certification agencies (HCA) offer services for a wide range of meat products, including beef, chicken and lamb.



The Halal certification process includes the inspection of the meat establishment, the process and products to ensure compliance with the Halal standards. The Halal certification bodies work closely with the personnel at the plant level to recommend adjustments. This support is very valuable for companies offering Halal products in Canada. ⁽⁴⁾

Halal meat certification is a very important attribute for Canadian Muslims. The Halal certification label includes the logo and unique identification number affixed to packaged meat products so consumers know that they are Halal certified.

Sources:

- (1) Sazili, A. et al, *Stunning Compliance in Halal Slaughter: A Review of Current Scientific Knowledge* - PMC (nih.gov), September 29, 2023.
- (2) CFIA, *Overview of regulatory requirements for ritual slaughter of food animals in Canada* - Canadian Food Inspection Agency March 19, 2024.
- (3) Saba, R., *Halal food industry growing to meet demand* | City News Vancouver, January 14, 2024.
- (4) Granney, E., *Alberta's 'best-kept secret': Beef producers chase halal market* | Edmonton Journal, January 29, 2018.