

Culturally Appropriate Guidelines: Halal

These nutritional guidelines have been put together by Registered Dietitians from Centrepont to provide information for staff and volunteers at food banks and food aid providers. They are evidence-based, affordable, and can be used to support beneficiaries to receive a nutritionally balanced parcel of food which takes individual needs such as health conditions, culture and kitchen facilities into account, within the means of the food bank.



A '**halal diet**' is often followed by Muslims practicing Islamic teachings. Islamic law labels certain foods as '**halal**', meaning permitted to eat, and other foods as '**haram**', meaning not permitted to eat. Muslims who observe these rules strictly will only consume halal food. Not all Muslims observe the same restrictions since diet is a personal choice, so it is important to check with people about their dietary practices. Muslims come from all over the world, and may have varied cultural diets while still eating halal. Providing halal food parcels will help to ensure everyone can meet their dietary requirements while respecting their personal preferences.

The following ingredients are always haram: *alcohol, pork or pork products, carnivorous animals, birds of prey, amphibians, blood or blood products.*

All animal parts or products extracted after slaughter are haram if they come from an animal that is not halal. This means it has not been slaughtered according to Islamic law: *all meat, rennet (acceptable if microbial source), lipase, pepsin, lard, whey, sodium stearoyl-lactylate, L-cysteine, mono and di glycerides, gelatine, broth & animal shortening.*

For foods which could be haram e.g. meat products, check the label for a halal symbol (see images above).

The following questions may be useful to ask the beneficiary who has asked for halal food, if you have the ability to further tailor their parcel:

- Are there any particular foods that you don't like or don't eat?
- Which foods do you avoid as part of your halal diet? *For example, some people do not eat pork but do eat non-halal chicken. It is important to be non-judgemental when asking this and be led by the beneficiary if possible, as different people will have differing levels of strictness within their halal diet which are all valid, and we don't want to add further restrictions to which foods are available in the food parcel.*
- Are there any particular foods you usually cook within your cuisine? *See cultural guidelines for more information.*
- What cooking facilities and equipment you have available in your kitchen? *E.g. Tin opener, oven, fridge, hob, microwave, kettle. See no cook guidelines for more information.*
- Would you like some halal recipes? *See next page for options*



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The following food items are all suitable halal options, try to include some from each group:

Carbohydrate-rich foods:

- Rice and couscous
- Pasta and noodles
- Other grains e.g. quinoa
- Crackers and bread products
- Cereal, oats and cereal bars
- Any type of flour
- Microwave packs of grains e.g. rice

Protein-rich foods:

- Tinned fish and seafood
- Tinned halal meat e.g. chicken
- Seeds, nuts and nut butter
- Tinned beans
- Dried lentils/beans/peas
- Tofu (long life)
- Protein bars & shakes (check)

Fruits and vegetables:

- Tinned vegetables
- Tinned fruit
- Tinned vegetable soups (e.g. lentil)
- Tomato/garlic/ginger paste
- Long life juice
- Dried fruits

Dairy and alternatives:

- UHT Milk or alternative milks (e.g. oat, almond, soya, rice)
- Milk powders
- Milk based puddings
- Tinned custard
- Soya desserts

Other items:

Oil (if possible ask for preference). Sauces and condiments. Herbs and spices. Desserts with agar/carrageenan base. Tea or coffee. Jam or honey. Items such as biscuits/crisps/chocolate can be included but ideally in small amounts e.g. 1 packet of biscuits, as they are high in fat, salt and sugar.

If you have access to fresh or frozen food you could also add:

Any fresh or frozen fruit and vegetables, potatoes, sweet potato, cassava and plantain, dairy products, fish, bread, eggs, butter or margarine. If possible you can provide halal meat (*check for halal symbol & no pork*).

An example 3 day parcel could include:

- 1 pack of pasta
- 1 pack of rice
- 1 box of oats
- 1 pot of peanut butter
- 2 tins of tuna
- 1 tin of chickpeas
- 1 pack of lentils
- 1 carton of UHT milk
- 1 tin of rice pudding
- 1 tin of vegetable soup
- 2 tins of vegetables e.g. spinach
- 1 tin of tomatoes
- 2 tins of fruit e.g. peaches
- 1 jar of sauce e.g. Bolognese
- 1 bottle of oil (small)
- 1 pack of spices or seasoning
- 1 pack of tea or coffee
- 1 pack of biscuits or cereal bars

Most of the recipes available are halal, including:

- Vegetarian Bean Chilli
- Lentil Dhal Curry
- Breakfast Yoghurt Pot
- Cupboard Lentil Soup
- Overnight Oats
- Tuna bean salad

For more information on the halal diet, go to www.halalrc.org