J&M® halal certified meals use only wholesome ingredients and have NO MSG, NO SOY, and NO ARTIFICIAL FLAVORS OR COLORS. Six varieties are gluten-free. Each meal is fully cooked and is conveniently packaged in either 10 oz. (283 g) microwaveable serving dishes or 8 oz. (227 g) travel and camping pouches. Reheat to eat in minutes.

LAMB & BARLEY STEW: Tender lamb, combined with barley, eggplant, red and green sweet peppers, zucchini and onions, create a true culinary delight! A scrumptious meal with a variety of textures, it is deliciously seasoned with herbs and spices of the Middle East.

CHICKEN MEDITERRANEAN: A hearty chicken meal with the flavors of the Mediterranean. Chunks of light and dark chicken with tomatoes, potatoes, chick peas and black olives in a tangy sauce.

CHICKEN & NOODLES: Chunks of light and dark chicken with Kluski noodles, peas, corn and carrots in a light sauce. A winning combination!

LAMB & LENTIL STEW: Tender lamb joins a medley of tomatoes, lentils, onions, chickpeas, zucchini and red and green sweet peppers. Aromatic herbs and spices invite all to taste and enjoy this truly delicious meal.

MY KIND OF CHICKEN: A favorite combination! Chunks of light and dark chicken with brown rice, peas and carrots in a mild sauce.

CHICKEN & BLACK BEANS: A flavor from the southwestern states, this meal has chunks of light and dark chicken with delicious and nutritious black beans, tomatoes, potatoes, sweet peppers, corn and kidney beans. Simple seasoning brings out its full flavor.

OLD WORLD STEW: Chunks of beef, with brown rice, tomatoes, zucchini and pinto beans. The sauce is seasoned with the aromatic flavors of the Middle East.

FLORENTINE LASAGNA: This meal has small lasagna noodles mixed with a deliciously seasoned tomato sauce. In the sauce is Ricotta cheese, Parmesan cheese, spinach and pinto bean pieces to add more protein without meat. A meal influenced by the tastes of Florence.

BEEF STEW: This satisfying stew is absolutely delicious. It has chunks of beef with chunks of potatoes, sweet peppers, tomatoes, cabbage, zucchini, chick peas and carrots in a flavorful sauce.

VEGETARIAN STEW: A meal perfect for vegetarian and hearty eaters alike! With macaroni, vegetables, potatoes, barley, lentils, peanuts and seasonings, this meal has great taste and a variety of textures.

CHICKEN MEDITERRANEAN: A hearty chicken meal with the flavors of the Mediterranean. Chunks of light and dark chicken with tomatoes, potatoes, chick peas and black olives in a tangy sauce.

OLD WORLD STEW: Chunks of beef, with brown rice, tomatoes, zucchini and pinto beans. The sauce is seasoned with the aromatic flavors of the Middle East.

FLORENTINE LASAGNA: This meal has small lasagna noodles mixed with a deliciously seasoned tomato sauce. In the sauce is Ricotta cheese, Parmesan cheese, spinach and pinto bean pieces to add more protein without meat. A meal influenced by the tastes of Florence.

PASTA WITH GARDEN VEGETABLES: This delicious and robust meal has rotini pasta with a pepper, mushroom, zucchini and tomato medley. It’s perfectly flavored with traditional Italian seasonings.
Contents

04 Editor's Note
05 From the Publisher's Desk

FOOD TRENDS
06 Why Consumers Are Going Nuts Over Nuts & Seeds
08 The Spice of Life

HEALTH & NUTRITION
12 Marathon Training: It’s More Than Just Running
16 How Diluting Face-to-Face Contact Is Making Us Unhealthier, Unhappier

QURANIC & PROPHETIC FOODS
20 Milk: A Choice Beverage

RECIPES
24 Mushroom, Spinach, and Asparagus Frittata
25 Spinach and Endive Salad with Crusted Scallops
26 Rosewater Macaroons
27 Golden Milk

FEATURES
28 Halal Is Mainstream
32 Food Waste Management
36 Halal-Certified Product Locator
Assalamu Alaikum,

Spring is here! It seems like the season we look forward to the most; it means the cold temps are in the past. While that may not always be accurate (depending on where you live), there is a joy that we feel here in the Midwest knowing we are another step closer to summer.

If you’re a runner, the slight rise in temperature makes it a bit more enjoyable to take runs outdoors. It’s also the perfect time to start training for that marathon. In “Marathon Training: It’s More Than Just Running,” you’ll read the tales and tips of those with varying marathon-running experiences.

In “Why Consumers are Going Nuts Over Nuts & Seeds,” you’ll find out the benefits behind this healthy snack trend; “Milk: A Choice Beverage” will provide you with insight on this Quranic and prophetic food.

Is your spice cabinet the epitome of minimalism? Find out why expanding your collection to include certain spices might actually help you maintain a healthy weight in “The Spice of Life.”

Those with an overabundance of food never intend to throw it away. But, that doesn’t mean it doesn’t happen. With 48 million Americans living in food insecure households in 2014, according to Feeding America, you’ll benefit from reading “Food Waste Management” by learning ways to keep from tossing leftovers in the trash.

Have you noticed more familiarity with the term “halal” from those who may not even be halal consumers? There’s definitely been an increase in halal products—on grocery store shelves and on restaurant menus. Here at IFANCA, our goal is to continue this trend and ensure Muslims are able to enjoy a variety of food products knowing the ingredients and handling comply with halal requirements. What do you think? Do you agree that “Halal Is Mainstream”?

Are you a user of social media? It certainly has its benefits, but find out how excessive use might be hurting you when you read “How Diluting Face-to-Face Contact Is Making Us Unhealthier, Unhappier.” Just make sure if you choose to cut back, you keep Halal Consumer in your newsfeed. Don’t forget Twitter!

As usual, this issue offers up some tasty and unique recipes we hope you’ll try. Let us know what you think—we love to hear from you!

Happy Reading!

Sincerely,
Alia Shalabi content manager
Assalamu Alaikum,

As we start a new year, we are always full of hope, looking forward to great opportunities and overcoming challenges. One area we hope to see improvement in is government oversight of scientific research.

As consumers, we rely upon government authorities to ensure the safety of the food chain. While we recognize the food industry is ever evolving, nonetheless, we expect the authorities to be one step ahead so that new innovations and new discoveries are fully vetted before they are approved for use in research and industry. In some cases, it may take a number of years to prove the safety of these innovations. Regulators must balance the impact of prematurely approving new study findings and stifling the industry with long, drawn out approvals.

The hope is that backtracking will not be necessary if the proper attention is given before approving new findings. For example, trans fats (partially hydrogenated oils) were initially thought to contribute to heart disease. However a 1980’s FDA commissioned study concluded they were not harmful, so they were approved as GRAS (generally recognized as safe). Being less expensive than saturated fats, they found many applications in food products. In the 1990s, clinical evidence showed an increase in heart disease associated with trans fat consumption. By the early 2000s, the FDA required the labeling of products containing trans fats, and just last year, the FDA announced that trans fats are not GRAS and must be eliminated from products within three years. So what do we say to all those who suffered with heart disease as a result of the initial decision to accept trans fats as GRAS?

Another example is the view on cholesterol. Until recently, the United States Dietary Guidelines suggested limiting the intake of dietary cholesterol from all sources. The new guidelines now suggest that it is the saturated fat in foods containing high cholesterol that is the problem, so the consumption of eggs, which are high in cholesterol but low in saturated fats, do not need to follow the previous limitations.

A final example is guidance on coffee consumption. While the previous guidelines did not directly address coffee and caffeine, and the new guidelines do not encourage non-coffee drinkers to start drinking coffee, the new guidelines do suggest that moderate coffee consumption of three to five cups a day can be incorporated into a healthy eating pattern.

Health-conscious consumers want to follow healthy eating patterns. As they rely on government guidance, they do not want to be surprised by new findings reversing previously issued guidance.

Sincerely,

Muhammad Munir Chaudry president
**Why Consumers Are Going Nuts Over Nuts & Seeds**

By Aysha Hussain

While trend forecasters predict seaweed may be the new kale for 2016, nuts and seeds are likely to continue to stand their ground as a leading snack food. Often dubbed a top “superfood,” these bite-sized, tasty morsels are already known for being heart-healthy, but what exactly makes them super?

Even though some dietitians and nutritionists shy away from labeling any particular food as a superfood, or a nutrient-dense food believed to be exceptionally beneficial for health and well-being, there is no denying that nuts and seeds have mass appeal. A 2015 survey of more than 500 registered dietitians conducted by trade magazine *Today’s Dietitian* and Pollock Communications, a health and wellness public relations company, found over 50 percent of dietitians predicted nuts and seeds as the top two health food picks amongst consumers. Aside from being a moderately inexpensive on-the-go snack with a long shelf life, Roni Enten Vissoker, an individualized biomedical nutritionist, says one of the reasons nuts and seeds are frequently described as a superfood is because they’re packed with nutrition in very small quantities.

“You don’t have to eat a lot to get a big bang for your buck,” says Vissoker. “Pretty much every nut is spectacular in terms of its nutritional profile—from vitamins, minerals, fiber, [and] fat. That’s fabulous for a small portion of food, but because they’re high in calories, it’s typically recommended to not consume too much of them.”

Despite their high calorie content, nuts are an excellent source of protein and fiber, which provide the additional advantage of making you feel full and therefore aiding in weight management. Most nuts are chock-filled with “good” fats (monounsaturated and polyunsaturated) like omega-3s that help raise high-density lipoprotein (HDL), or “good” cholesterol levels, and lower “bad” low-density lipoprotein (LDL), preventing the onset of heart disease. These nutritious nuggets are also rich in essential minerals such as calcium and antioxidants like vitamin E that strengthen the immune system preventing diseases like arthritis, memory loss, and other types of inflammation.

Should this kind of information give us permission to go nuts? Not quite. As long as you’re not allergic, Vissoker recommends consuming about a handful of raw (unsalted and unroasted) nuts once or twice a day, depending on your nutritional needs. Research shows eating a small handful of nuts a day might even help those who suffer from chronic diseases live longer. According to a June 2015 study published in *The International Journal of Epidemiology*, 5 to 10 grams of nuts (approximately less than a half handful) a day was linked to a reduced chance of death caused by cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, and cancer.

Vissoker, a holistically-minded nutritionist, is in favor of diversifying food intake, and that applies to nuts and seeds as well. “[For example], brazil nuts are considered one of the best sources of selenium,” she says. “Then you have chia seeds, a really amazing source of omega-3. I wouldn’t want to limit one kind of nut or seed. Make a mix of all of them if possible.”

Like most nuts, seeds too are high in protein and fiber. Plus, much like walnuts are rich in omega-3s, chia, flax, hemp, and pumpkin seeds are considered to be among the best plant-based sources of these fatty acids. And when it comes to vitamins and minerals, most seeds, including sunflowers seeds, contain significant amounts of potassium, magnesium, selenium, and zinc.
Although not well-known throughout the United States, Kalongi or Nigella sativa seeds (also referred to as black caraway or black cumin) are widely used as a spice across India and the Middle East. In addition, these black seeds have been used to treat ailments and diseases for thousands of years, from headaches and nasal congestion to diabetes and cardiovascular diseases. Research studies have shown one of the many reasons Nigella sativa seeds are beneficial for overall health is because they consist of several active compounds including thymoquinone, a potent antioxidant with anti-inflammatory and anticancer properties.

Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him [PBUH]) was an advocate of Nigella sativa seeds. According to Hadith, he often described black seeds as a multi-purpose herb with medicinal effects. In the hadith translated by Sahih Muslim, Abu Huraira reported that he heard God’s Messenger (PBUH) saying, “Nigella seed is a remedy for every disease except death”.

So you want to start reaping the health benefits of eating nuts and seeds? Vissoker says it’s important to pace yourself when adding these high fat and fiber snacks into your diet, especially for the first time as they can be hard to digest for some. Vissoker recommends soaking nuts and seeds overnight in warm water to remove the skins, which helps with digestion.

Not a fan of noshing on nuts or seeds alone? Try sprinkling walnuts or cashews over your next salad or mix chia seeds into your yogurt. Nuts and seeds can also add texture and flavor to sauces, rice or pilafs, stir-fries, breads, and muffins.

The proof is in the pudding (chia pudding, that is) that nuts and seeds are well on their way to becoming among the top consumer rated foods for 2016. Whether eaten as a snack or incorporated into your next meal, these nutrient packed powerhouses are a force to be reckoned with. And by the looks of it, they’re not going anywhere anytime soon.

AYSHA HUSSAIN is a New York-based writer and journalist. Aysha was featured in *The New York Times*’ “We, Myself and I,” and her work has been published in *Newsday* and *Muslim Girl*.

---

**Here are some quick and easy recipes from Vissoker you may want to try:**

**Almond “Parmesan” Topping**

BY RONI ENTEN VISSOKER

**Ingredients**

- ½ cup ground almonds/almond flour
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- ½ teaspoon turmeric
- ½ teaspoon sweet paprika
- ½ teaspoon sea salt

**Directions**

1. Combine all ingredients.
2. Shake it up and sprinkle on rice, pasta, toast, steamed veggies, and more. (Note: You can change up spice content to suit your taste.)

---

**Chocolate Chia Pudding**

BY RONI ENTEN VISSOKER

**Servings:** 1

**Ingredients**

- 1 cup unsweetened almond, coconut, or oat milk
- 2 tablespoons chia seeds
- 1 teaspoon raw cocoa powder
- ¼ teaspoon cinnamon
- ½ tablespoon maple syrup, or more to taste

**Directions**

1. Combine all ingredients in a bowl.
2. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour, stirring once an hour to keep the seeds from clumping. (Note: This makes a single serving, so you can scale this recipe up or down. It’s delicious on its own or topped with fresh fruit and/or toasted nuts.)

Copyright © 2016 Roni Enten Vissoker
The Spice of Life

By Leen R. Jaber
Although this study is relatively new, the health benefits of chili peppers or cayenne peppers, the most common variety of chili peppers, have been known for a long time. Capsaicin is the substance found in cayenne peppers, which gives the pepper its burning hot taste. But it also does more than that; capsaicin blocks a substance called “substance P,” a neuropeptide that is involved in inflammatory pain processes. Cayenne pepper has been found to therefore temporarily relieve pain caused by inflammation, especially in diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis, psoriasis, shingles, and neuropathy. Clinical studies show that this is especially true when the capsaicin is applied topically as a cream. Orally, however, cayenne pepper has been shown to promote cardiovascular health and aid in weight-loss by suppressing appetite and burning body fat. This happens through a process known as thermogenesis. However, this does not mean you should add hot sauce to a fat-laden cheeseburger and expect to lose weight, explains Hannah el-Amin, dietitian and owner of Nutrition That Fits, a nutrition counseling company aimed at helping individuals manage and improve their health through optimizing their diets. Rather, supplementing a healthy diet with spices and herbs such as fresh or dried cayenne pepper can help enhance a healthy diet and aid in weight-loss in addition to healing chronic pain and other conditions. Cayenne has also been shown to soothe and more quickly heal a sore throat when mixed with lemon and honey.

Many of you probably use curry powder in an array of dishes you make. Did you know that curry powder often contains cayenne pepper along with cumin, cardamom, coriander, and other herbs? Therefore, curry powder includes many of the benefits of cayenne, plus others such as aiding in digestion, reducing intestinal inflammation, detoxifying the body, and reducing allergies.

Turmeric, another ingredient found in chili powder and often used in cooking to provide a yellowish or orange color to rice or potatoes, is another spice hailed for its health benefits. As El-Amin explains, “Turmeric falls in the category of superfoods for its exceptional qualities.” Known best for its anti-inflammatory properties, turmeric has shown positive results when used to treat symptoms of carpal tunnel, joint inflammation, high cholesterol, and even Alzheimer’s. In India and other parts of the world, it has even been used as a topical paste to cure skin infections. Turmeric is also high in antioxidants, which may help prevent cancer when eaten regularly. Although it can be added to any meal for an extra boost of nutrition and color, one of the most popular ways to consume turmeric is by making a daily cup of turmeric tea, or what is now being called “golden milk.” Golden milk, a common drink in Okinawa, Japan, and other parts of Asia, combines the healing benefits of turmeric with the additional anti-oxidant and anti-inflammatory power found in ginger and black pepper plus cinnamon simmered with coconut, soy, or almond milk. And when consumed regularly, golden milk can have amazing effects on the body.
“I found when I feel extra inflamed or swollen, the golden milk is a great help,” says Sawsan Abubaker, an accountant and real estate agent from the Chicago suburbs. Abubaker suffers from both carpal tunnel as well as arthritis in her knees, which is compounded by long hours at her desk typing on a computer. After incorporating golden milk into her diet for the last year, along with ginger tea and cinnamon tea, she has noticed a notable difference in her body. Before Abubaker began to incorporate these teas and clean eating in her life, she lived on the typical diet many Americans rely on: processed foods high in fats and carbohydrates. Since changing her lifestyle and adding these spices to her diet, Abubaker has described herself as feeling “lighter” as opposed to her old eating habits that led her to feel weighed down, lazy, and sleepy. “The effects [of incorporating spices] were positive for sure,” she added, “but the results are not quick, as we are always looking for quick results.” As Abubaker explains, it takes time to flush out the unhealthy elements that we’ve spent years filling our bodies with.

Majdel Musa, a United States native currently working as a legal consultant and instructor in Dubai, has also seen life-changing effects from cleaning up her diet and adding golden milk and spices to her daily regimen. “It was amazing. I had more energy, my aches and pains went away, my menstrual cycle was shorter and lighter, and to top it all off, I lost 40 pounds,” she says. Adding that golden milk helped her sleep well, it may be useful to consume shortly before bed. Much anecdotal evidence has also shown that consuming golden milk regularly or at the onset of a cold can shorten the duration as well as reduce the severity of the symptoms.

Cinnamon is another spice with noteworthy benefits, namely the role it plays in lowering blood sugar. El-Amin asserts that consuming 500mg of cinnamon a day for 40 days (in conjunction with your doctor-recommended blood sugar management plan) can make a significant difference in blood sugar levels for people with type 2 diabetes. More than 500mg for over 40 days is not recommended, however. Cinnamon also counteracts congestion, aids circulation, and eases nausea, explains El-Amin.

El-Amin describes the best way to transition to a healthy diet with a few steps. First, self-assess. It’s important to keep a food journal for a while to really be conscious of how and what you eat. Second, find a reliable guide for healthy, clean eating. El-Amin suggests the University of Wisconsin Integrated Medicine Department of Family Medicine. Third, compare your food journal with the reliable guide and look for the areas you can start improving by integrating certain healthy foods and spices. “Pick the two easiest,” says El-Amin. “Don’t try to overhaul it all at once because it will limit your long-term success. Gradual change is associated with long-term results.”

Spicing up your meals may make a huge difference in your overall health and quality of life, but remember to look at your life as a whole. Start incorporating healthy habits all around and you will start to see the desired results.

LEEN R. JABER has been a published freelance journalist for over 10 years. She is currently working on publishing a volume of original poetry and short stories. Leen is also a singer, guitarist, and activist for Palestinian rights.
FRESH, HOME GROWN FLAVOR.

Come home to American Lamb.

FEATURED DISH
Lamb and Pomegranate Stew with Walnuts

No artificial or synthetic growth hormones are used in lamb production in the U.S.

American lamb is up to 10,000 miles and 30 days fresher than imported product.

More than 80,000 family farmers raise healthy American lamb across every state in the U.S.

American lamb is a flavorful, nutrient-rich food and an excellent source of vitamin B12, niacin, zinc, and selenium. American lamb is fresh, not frozen and halal certified.

Although growth hormones are not used in U.S. lamb production, they are legal to use. Nutrition Source: USDA National Nutrient Database

Find the recipe, certified halal suppliers, videos on our farms, and more at www.americanlamblovers.com or call the American Lamb Board at 1-866-327-LAMB (5262).
MARATHON TRAINING
It’s More Than Just Running

By Nadia Malik
The first step in training for a marathon may be the most significant one. Making a firm decision to take on 26.2 miles gives runners a definitive goal and makes it easier to keep going when hitting hurdles along the way. As much as preparation involves pushing physical boundaries, it’s also very much an exercise in mental planning.

“A lot of people who are runners are very driven, success-prone people,” explains Trevor Spencer of the Marathon Training Academy. Patti Finke, founder and director of the Portland Marathon Clinic, agrees. “I think marathoners tend to be very goal-oriented people; they tend to be visionary.”

Once that vision is in place, a schedule is imperative, for both beginners and seasoned athletes. Most concur that any informed program you feel comfortable with will work fine—as long as you stick with it. Most instructors recommend being able to run at least three to six miles at a time for a good six months before even taking on longer distances. Once that endurance has built up, aspiring competitors can take on more mileage over the next 16 to 24 weeks.

“The best place to start is by running slow: if you can’t breathe, you’re [going] too fast,” Finke advises. The secret to finding the right pace is being able to jog and speak at the same time. The sport shouldn’t be hard, she expands. It’s not a punishment; it should be enjoyable. And Finke would know. Now in her 70s, she’s been an enthusiast for more than 30 years, participated in more than 85 marathons, and has written a book with her husband, Warren, on how to succeed at races.

Ammiel Mateen, a Chicago resident who ran her first marathon in 2006 (and has run at least seven since then), says at first she was intrigued by the possibility that her body could actually handle the physical activity. As she continued her preparation, she realized that the sport wasn’t the only change she was seeing in her life. She was intrigued by the discipline she would need to exhibit to succeed.

“You had to make sure you were eating right and sleeping properly. I found that I had to be in the right company. You can’t be around people who are speaking negatively all the time,” she explains.

Mateen once went out on a 15-mile jog and had no issues until the halfway point, when she started ruminating over a problem. “I started having thoughts about this situation, and I remember my body slowing down. I came to a point where I started walking, and I couldn’t get started up again,” she laments.

The same can happen in the actual race. “Regardless of how you’re feeling, you have to push yourself to not feel that way. That’s what will kill your race,” she expounds.
“I’ve tried to be stronger than those negative thoughts.”

Finke says she often uses these life lessons as encouragement when working with new joggers. Endurance builds slowly over time, and those in the process have to understand not to overlook smaller stages to achieve the larger objective. “Goals add up. Use that as a metaphor for life and approach everything as taking little steps,” she expands.

Annan Shehadi, a Hickory Hills, Illinois, resident who tackled her first marathon 10 years ago, found one of her biggest challenges to be the summer heat. However, planning ahead helped overcome that hurdle. If she didn’t feel like carrying water, she made sure to plan a route that hit gas stations where she could stop.

Physical endurance builds up with being consistent. Different specialists have varying ideas about the best preparation. Some recommend only running three days a week. Others endorse more. Whatever the route taken, steady training will help racers figure out when they need to drink water, what miles are the toughest for them, and how much food and nutrients are necessary to make it through.

Spencer and his wife, Angie, who helm a podcast and website with guidelines and tips for runners, suggest going in with a plan and sticking to it. “You don’t want to do anything new on race day,” he continues.

It’s also important to listen to what your body is telling you, which includes the fuel that goes into your system.

“For a beginner, you need to start with baby steps,” Spencer informs. “Eat a healthy diet, whatever that looks like. Some people are low-carb, some people are vegan. If you’re not eating a lot of sugar and processed foods, you should be good. Then you learn things as you go.”

There’s no one answer for any aspiring athlete on the best diet to consume. Instructors’ opinions also vary on when to eat. Some endorse food before a long outing. However, from experience, Mateen can tell you that she reacts better when she doesn’t eat before a long distance and then fuels up later.

Finke supports eating meals that consist of protein, fats, and carbohydrates to ensure enough energy and nutrients are taken in to last through ever-increasing distances.

Anyone who takes on the sport will also hear about “carb-loading” as a way to prepare; however, that doesn’t necessarily mean eating a large plate of spaghetti the day before a contest. That will likely just be stored as fat and not come in handy while actually in a race. Spencer advises eating more carbohydrates after long periods of exercise. Finke adds that may come in the form of consuming sports gels during the actual competition.

The bottom line, however, is that you will slowly figure out what is helping you and what needs to be improved. “Your body craves better food once you’re pushing yourself physically,” Mateen explains.

It’s also surprising what most people can handle when pushed. It’s also surprising what most people can handle when pushed. Mateen decided to continue exercising in Ramadan while fasting. “It’s difficult, but it’s doable,” she says. “I thought of all these athletes—football players and basketball players and soccer players—who are still doing it. They train as heavily as they do and fast, so I thought I could train at the level I do and fast."

Of course, any physical activity should include proper hydration (Mateen participated in group runs right before sunset so she could drink water afterward) and be preceded by consultation with a doctor.

Specialty equipment can also be overwhelming for first-time aspiring athletes, but the most important thing to keep in mind is to wear proper clothing that will wick moisture away and have a good pair of shoes that fit your stride. Spencer advises visiting a specialty store to have your gait evaluated.
For years, Mateen wore heavy cotton clothing when exercising until one day getting soaked in the rain made her realize advice from a fellow marathoner to wear lighter and tighter fabrics made sense. However, the gear suited for athletes did give Mateen a bit of a crisis of conscience.

“I stopped running for about a year because I was thinking it’s not Islamic because of some of the clothing I would wear,” she says. In the end, Mateen made an effort to find appropriate clothing, but she also resolved to make her intention clear to herself.

“If any time I think I’m wearing something to be attractive, then that outfit I wouldn’t wear. Also I felt that running was something [God] has blessed me with,” she continues. “That was a tough thing for me because I think it stops a lot of Muslim women and girls from running and possibly stops them from being as good as they could be in the sport.”

One of the biggest challenges for any distance runner—but especially for beginners—is scheduling. The timetable is pretty demanding: 26 miles doesn’t come out of nowhere.

When Shehadi participated in the Chicago Marathon in 2006, she was in college in the midst of midterms. For a few weeks before the actual race, she didn’t have much time to consistently take on long distances. “It made me a little discouraged,” she says. But, the groundwork for months before that slowdown provided extra motivation. “I think because you’ve put in so much and have a lot of adrenaline with the crowd and everything that day. . . I ran it and I finished it,” she says.

A decade later, she’s contemplating another go at it, but this time around she may take advantage of being part of a group. Most trainers also suggest working with other enthusiasts as extra motivation. Shehadi is also planning to devote her efforts to charity, which provides an added incentive to keep going. Those going that route pledge to raise a certain amount of money for an organization and solicit donors. Because contributors know the fundraiser has intentions to run, it delivers a little extra push to keep at it.

As Finke and others who keep coming back for more have proven, once you’ve taken part in one, marathons can become addictive. “Once you buy into it, you do the training,” she continues. “It’s exceedingly empowering.”

NADIA MALIK holds a degree in journalism and is a former reporter for a Chicago-area newspaper. She has written for websites and publications and has also worked for several non-profit organizations.
How Diluting Face-to-Face Contact Is Making Us Unhealthier, Unhappier

By Naazish YarKhan

Facebook posts, reminding us that our cell phones draw us closer to those far away while distancing us from those close at hand, make the rounds ironically via social media. In an age where Facebook and Snapchat are the main means to stay abreast of our loved ones’ lives, connecting face-to-face, or even talking on the phone, seems plain old-fashioned.

And it’s not a good thing.

According to Susan Pinker, psychologist and author of *The Village Effect: How Face-to-Face Contact Can Make Us Healthier and Happier*, “Everybody gets into a funk sometimes. Does anybody wonder, ‘Maybe I haven’t had enough social contact?’ That’s the main reason I wrote the book, to ask why we aren’t making a big deal of this.” She writes about how spending time online rather than in person with people is leaving us feeling empty. According to her research, our face-to-face interactions have a direct correlation with our longevity and happiness. “Besides emotional support, friends, family members, and acquaintances provide pertinent information, such as referrals to doctors and advice about shared experiences. They also provide lifts to the clinic and deliveries of chicken-noodle soup—the kind of help that can only be offered in-person,” reads a *Globe and Mail* interview with Pinker.
While online friends don’t necessarily deliver soup, isn’t there plenty of information, slices of life, and advice being exchanged digitally?

That may be the case, but Facebook user Shayma Ansari of Chicago, Illinois, says, “‘Lol’ can never replace the gratifying sound of that unique laugh of that great friend who actually thinks you’re funny.” She continues, “A conversation filled with facial expressions and non-verbal responses with someone, face-to-face, provides a much deeper feeling of trust and friendship.” Social media, she feels, has actually eroded social skills. Haven’t we all abandoned a digital exchange or two before it ended, sometimes not even responding at all or maybe days later? Would we dare walk off while a friend was mid-sentence when in person? Ansari says, “Face-to-face you are forced to deal with someone’s immediate reactions to you, good or bad, which makes you a lot more aware of how you are coming off.”

SO MANY CONNECTIONS, SUCH FEW BONDS

Studies show that sharing our intimate thoughts is the glue between relationships. Peruse Facebook and you’ll see plenty of soul-sharing, from how your “friends” are feeling to what they ate for lunch. So why does social media leave folks feeling more alone, even when everything they say elicits some kind of response from at least a couple of people? What is it about in-person interactions that make them better for us? The paradox is that, offline, not everyone wants to hear about how your day has gone, let alone share your excitement at spotting an actual chicken crossing the road!

“I really do feel that when you care about another person’s reactions and their feelings, that is when you make that bond,” says Ansari. “It’s part of not feeling alone. Online, you can ignore what someone wrote at your will. There’s no bond there. Further, there’s nothing unique or special when everyone can react and respond in the same finite ways, i.e., ‘likes’, ‘pokes’, ‘shares’. It’s like just because celebrities receive fan-mail doesn’t mean they don’t feel lonely.”

Social media allows us to get lazy about physically reaching out. While adults are inadvertently sacrificing that sense of companionship and closeness that only in-person interactions achieve, dwindling face-to-face time is wiring our kids’ brains wrong.

ELECTRONIC BABYSITTERS ARE BAD NEWS

Face-to-face time is intrinsic to healthy brain development. The brain becomes underdeveloped when so much of a child’s interactions aren’t in person, says Aliyah Banister, a licensed clinical therapist with ICNA Relief Chicago’s Muslim Family Services and Islamic Foundation School, Villa Park. She specializes in Islamic Psychology. “Kids are not born with social skills. They learn over time by watching others and by learning how to be a friend,” says Banister. “When you interact via a screen, the quality of the interaction is diluted. Even with emoji’s and emoticons, you miss the tone of voice and facial expressions. You aren’t learning to read someone and react accordingly. You don’t have the nonverbal social cues to regulate your reactions.”

Face-to-face time, besides beneficial in-and-of itself, is an antidote to the unchecked screen time many children have. “Dopamine is secreted when your brain encounters pleasurable or something interesting,” Banister explains. “When you’re online, every time you’re bored with one thing, you can skip to the next. So over time, the brain is being rewired to

How Can You Carve Out More Face-to-Face Time?

1. Stop saying, “We should meet for coffee” or “We should catch up soon.” Instead, pull out your calendar and pencil in a date.
2. If a friend’s Facebook status update expresses unhappiness or stress, use it as a cue for an in-person visit.
3. Volunteer for causes that involve consistent face-time with fellow helpers.
4. Buddy up when you work out or run errands, without using face-to-face time only to vent. When it comes to complaints, know when to stop before you start.
5. Host a board game night “just because.”
6. Attend jumuah consistently. Attend Islamic lectures in person even if they are live-cast. You’ll potentially make friends with other regulars.
7. Instead of dropping your child off at practice, stay there and, most importantly, turn your phone off. You’ll be surprised by what you learn chit-chatting with other parents there.
seek that dopamine rush, to satiate a desire for constant stimulation. Developmentally, this is a problem for children. They are constantly looking for the next rush.” This creates unrealistic expectations of the world and life.

Listening to the teacher, reading textbooks, or doing homework doesn’t provide that concentrated dopamine rush you get when bouncing between games, videos, and texts. Consequently, students end up unable to focus. Their attention drifts to their phone and the internet, seeking that squirt of dopamine. With face-to-face time, the nature of interactions and dopamine release is more stable, says Banister.

Face-to-face time involves not only the sharing of memories but the making of new ones. Shared experiences join hearts. However, even within families, texting is replacing conversations. Dinner together as a family used to be a way to connect, but cellphones have encroached on this family tradition which itself is withering away under the onslaught of rushed meals and staggered meal times. Meals in front of a TV quell any discussion. These habits consistently leave moments for meaningful catching up face-to-face untouched.

“I treat a lot of children who are very anxious or sad,” says Banister. “One of my plans is not allowing technology for two weeks. We do that to assess the child to see what the underlying problem is. Then after their brain resets, it’s possible to add in some screen time. Without your phone or computer, you are more likely to engage in physical exercise or social face-to-face activities and notice the world around you. Kids should have normal interactions and acquire realistic expectations as to how ‘stimulating’ life should be so as to develop a better attention span.”

THOSE WATER COOLERS DO WONDERS

Face-to-face benefits apply to workplace productivity, as well. According to Pinker, in the Globe and Mail article, “Four ways socializing can help you live a healthier life,” MIT researchers “found that workers at a bank call center were happier and (20 percent) more productive when they went on breaks at the same time” versus not. A simple yet effective means to employee retention and a competitive edge! 😎

NAAZISH YARKHAN has bylines in more than 50 media outlets including Chicago Tribune and Huffington Post.
What are your financial goals?

The Amana Mutual Funds and Saturna Capital can help you achieve your financial objectives. We offer a variety of accounts to fit your investing needs:

- Individual Retirement Accounts
- Employer Plans (SEP, SIMPLE, 401(k))
- Health Savings Accounts
- Education Savings Accounts

Visit our website or call a representative to get started today.

Amana Mutual Funds Trust
Income • Growth • Developing World

1-888-732-6262
www.amanafunds.com

Please consider an investment’s objectives, risks, charges, and expenses carefully before investing. To obtain this and other important information about the Amana Funds in a current prospectus or summary prospectuses, please visit www.amanafunds.com or call toll free 1-888/73-AMANA. Please read the prospectus or summary prospectuses carefully before investing.

Investing involves risk, including the risk that you may lose money. The Amana Mutual Funds invest according to Islamic principles. This limits opportunities and may increase risk.

The Amana Funds are distributed by Saturna Brokerage Services, member FINRA / SIPC. Saturna Brokerage Services is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Saturna Capital Corporation, adviser to the Amana Funds.
Milk:
A Choice Beverage

By Sarene Alsharif, MPH
God loves his servants and wants them to live happy, healthy lives. Through His perfect religion, God gives His followers the keys to success. In order to have a healthy body, one must select healthy foods; after all, you are what you eat. In His divine manner, God sent His people signs through the Quran and the Hadith of Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him [PBUH]) about what foods to select for optimal health. One of those foods is milk, the milk of cows, goats, and camels to be precise.

Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, an accomplished scholar of Islamic Sciences and author of the book Medicine of the Prophet, states in his book that milk was Prophet Muhammad’s (PBUH) favorite drink. In fact, in a hadith from Sunan Ibn Majah narrated from Ibn Abbas, the Prophet (PBUH) said, “[. . .] And whoever is given milk to drink by Allah, let him say: Allahumma barik lana fihi wa zidna minhu (O Allah, bless it for us and give us more of it). For I do not know of any food or drink that suffices, apart from milk.” Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was telling his followers that milk is a good source of water and nutrients at once, a quality unique to milk.

Current research is backing up this hadith. According to the National Dairy Council, milk is a high quality protein source while providing healthy carbohydrates and numerous vitamins and minerals such as calcium, phosphorus, riboflavin, and vitamin B12. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2015–2020 published by the United States Departments of Health and Human Services recommends people two years of age and older consume two to three servings of milk a day to promote health and prevent disease.

Cow’s milk supplies multiple different types of high quality proteins, whey and casein being the two most commonly known. In 2013, the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition (AJCN) published an article discussing the functionality of milk proteins explaining that whey and casein have different digestion times. It takes the stomach three hours to digest whey while it takes over six hours to digest casein. Prolonged digestion time increases satiety, making a person feel full for a longer time, which can help with weight management. The AJCN and the Journal of Nutrition and Metabolism both published articles in 2013 stating the peptides, or small proteins, in milk are natural angiotensin-converting enzyme (ACE)-inhibitors. This means the peptides in milk help relax the blood vessels which, according to the Mayo Clinic, reduces high blood pressure and puts less stress on the heart.

God shows us His tremendous abilities through how He sends milk to humanity. In Surah (Chapter) An-Nahl (The Bee), He says, “And indeed, for you in grazing livestock is a lesson. We give you drink from what is in their bellies – between excretion and blood – pure milk, palatable to drinkers” (Quran 16:66).

Like water, milk is one of only a few drinks made up of only one ingredient. To describe it as “heavenly” would not be far off. In the Quran we are told rivers of milk await us in Paradise. “Is the description of Paradise, which the righteous are promised, wherein are rivers of water unaltered, rivers of milk the taste of which never changes, rivers of wine delicious to those who drink, and rivers of purified honey, in which they will have from all [kinds of] fruits and forgiveness from their Lord, like [that of] those who abide eternally in the Fire and are given to drink scalding water that will sever their intestines?” (47:15).

Enjoying milk on a daily basis is both healthy and sunnah (practice of Prophet Muhammad [PBUH])! Because milk proteins take a long time to digest, dairy products make great breakfasts for adults and children. Enjoy IFANCA halal-certified Organic Valley milk with whole grain cereal, or granola with fresh fruits and yogurt. Not a fan of the taste or texture of milk? Try chia seed pudding or a coffee latte. Looking for a healthy pre- or post- workout snack? Milk and a banana provide all the protein, carbohydrates, minerals, and electrolytes the body needs.
Searching for something to cool down with? Make a milk or yogurt or yogurt based smoothie with fresh or frozen fruits and a touch of honey. Want to wind down after a long day? Relax with a cup of warm milk and a dollop of honey or a mug of chai with milk to clear your mind and soothe your body. But remember to rinse your mouth with some fresh water after enjoying your milk. In a hadith narrated by Ibn Abbas, “Allah’s Apostle [PBUH] drank milk and then rinsed his mouth and said, ‘It contains fat.’” (Bukhari).

Milk is miraculous both in its health benefits and natural production. It is a daily reminder of the greatness and abilities of God. Current research shows it is important to promote and preserve health. As the National Dairy Council advertisements say, “Milk. It does a body good.” And it’s sunnah, too! 

SARENE ALSHARIF, MPH is a nutritionist accredited by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. She holds a master’s degree in public health. Sarene’s passion is health promotion and disease prevention through nutritious eating and exercise.

The following brands carry several milk and other dairy products that are certified halal by IFANCA:

- Cabot Creamery yogurts and cheeses
- California Sunshine milk varieties
- Organic Valley milk varieties, creams, butters, cheeses, sour cream, cottage cheese, whey products
- Mariposa Dairy cheeses
WE MAKE SURE THE FOOD YOU SERVE IS HALAL.

ISLAMIC FOOD AND NUTRITION COUNCIL OF AMERICA:
In matters of halal, we take the doubt out of doubtful.

The Islamic Food and Nutrition Council of America, IFANCA, is working with the world’s food producers to ensure what you eat is halal and healthy.

www.facebook.com/halalconsumer   www.twitter.com/ifanca
www.youtube.com/ifanca4halal     halal@ifanca.org
www.ifanca.org

*The Crescent M™ and IFANCA are registered trademarks of the Islamic Food and Nutrition Council of America (IFANCA) and appear on IFANCA halal-certified products internationally.
Mushroom, Spinach, and Asparagus Frittata
By Saira Mohiuddin

Servings: 4–6

INGREDIENTS

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 10 Cremini mushrooms, sliced
- 10 ounces fresh spinach, chopped
- ½ bunch asparagus, sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 8 eggs
- 2 egg yolks
- 4 tablespoons Organic Valley® Organic Whole Milk
- ½ cup grated parmesan cheese
- 1 tablespoon Organic Valley® Butter
- sea salt and fresh cracked black pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

1. Heat olive oil in a medium saucepan. Add mushrooms and cook for 3 to 5 minutes. Add spinach and cook until wilted. Add asparagus and cook for 1 minute. Add garlic and cook until fragrant, about 1 to 2 minutes. Increase heat until all moisture appears to have evaporated. Add salt and pepper to taste. Set aside.

2. In a separate bowl, whisk eggs and egg yolks with milk. Lightly salt and season with pepper. Stir in cheese and cooked vegetables.

3. Heat skillet over a medium flame and add butter with a splash of olive oil (prevents butter from burning). Add egg and vegetable mixture and shake pan back and forth on stove top. After a few layers have cooked, turn the heat to low and cover. Cook for 10 minutes. Meanwhile, preheat the broiler.

4. Uncover skillet and place in oven for 1 to 2 minutes. Remove from oven and loosen the edges of the frittata; give the skillet a shake. Allow to rest for 5 minutes, then gently loosen frittata from the sides again and turn over onto a round serving platter. Slice and serve immediately.
Spinach and Endive Salad with Crusted Scallops
By YaQutullah Ibraheem Muhammad MS, RDN, LD

Servings: 4–6

INGREDIENTS

**Tangerine Vinaigrette**
- 1 tablespoon red onion, minced
- 1 teaspoon garlic, minced
- 2 teaspoons mixed chives, tarragon, dill, chopped
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- ½ cup apple cider vinegar
- ½ teaspoon tangerine or orange zest
- 2 tablespoons tangerine or orange juice
- ¼ teaspoon red pepper corns, ground

**Salad**
- 6 cups baby spinach
- 6 cups torn endive
- 2 tangerines or oranges, segmented
- 4 ounces walnuts
- 2 teaspoons coriander seeds
- ¼ teaspoon coarse kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 1 pound dry sea scallops
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 6–8 ounces Mariposa Dairy Feta Goat Cheese

DIRECTIONS

1. To prepare vinaigrette, whisk together all ingredients in a medium bowl.
2. In a large salad bowl, combine spinach, endive, and tangerine (or orange) segments.
3. Add the vinaigrette and toss to coat. Divide the salad among four plates and top with walnuts. Set aside.
4. Coarsely grind coriander seeds and combine with kosher salt and pepper in a small bowl.
5. Sprinkle mix on both sides of scallops.
6. Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat until shimmering.
7. Add the scallops to heated oil and cook until golden brown and crusty, 3 minutes per side.
8. Serve the scallops over the salad and top with Mariposa Dairy Feta Goat Cheese.
Rosewater Macaroons
By Saira Mohiuddin

Servings: 15 macaroons

INGREDIENTS

Cookie
1/2 cup, plus 2 tablespoons almond flour
1 cup powdered sugar
2 egg whites, room temperature
8 drops pink food coloring
5 tablespoons granulated sugar

Filling
4 ounces cream cheese, room temperature
1/3 cup powdered sugar
1 teaspoon rosewater
1/2 teaspoon halal vanilla flavor

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Rack should be placed in the center of the oven.
2. Line two cookie sheets with parchment paper. Combine 1 cup powdered sugar and almond flour in food processor. Pulse into a fine powder. Sift the mixture into a large bowl.
3. In stand mixer, beat egg whites at medium speed. Add food coloring and granulated sugar gradually. Beat at a high speed for 3 minutes, until mixture reaches a stiff peak.
4. Gradually add half the flour mixture to the egg white mixture. Using a spatula, press flour against side of the bowl for about 15 strokes. Repeat with the remaining flour mixture for 15 more strokes.
5. Fill a piping bag with a 1/2-inch tip with the batter. Pipe out batter onto parchment paper into 1 1/2-inch circles about 2 inches apart.
6. Allow macaroons to rest for 40 minutes. The cookies need to dry before baking in order to achieve a crispy outer layer and chewy center. Check the cookies by making sure they are no longer sticky to the touch.
7. Bake for 14 minutes.
8. For the filling, beat cream cheese, powdered sugar, rosewater, and vanilla flavor in a stand mixer for 3 minutes at a medium speed.
9. Cookies should be matched to the same size. Pipe filling on the flat side of cookie and top with another cookie. Serve and enjoy!
Golden Milk
By Leen R. Jaber

Servings: 1

INGREDIENTS

2 cups almond or coconut milk
1 teaspoon powdered turmeric
1 teaspoon powdered ginger
1 sprinkle black pepper
1 sprinkle cayenne pepper
1 sprinkle nutmeg
honey and cinnamon to taste

*Note: Fresh turmeric (1/2-inch turmeric bark), fresh ginger root (1/2-inch), and freshly crushed pepper corns can be used instead of powdered spices.

DIRECTIONS

1. Place almond/coconut milk in a medium-sized pot. Add turmeric, ginger, black pepper, cayenne pepper, and nutmeg. Stir with a wooden spoon.

2. Allow mixture to simmer over medium heat, stirring frequently. Simmer for 3 to 5 minutes, continuing to stir so that all ingredients dissolve in the milk. Take care to avoid clumps and make sure the mixture does not overflow, burn, or stick.

3. Turn off heat and cover pot for 10 minutes, allowing the spices to diffuse.

4. Add desired amount of honey to a tall latte glass.

5. Pour milk mixture into glass and stir well.

6. Sprinkle cinnamon on top and enjoy.

*Note: Golden milk can also be served over ice. Allow the milk to cool completely, or put in the refrigerator for an hour, before pouring over ice.
HALAL IS MAINSTREAM

By Nadia Malik
In the past few years, the availability of halal products in mainstream venues has seemed to grow significantly.

Taking Chicago as an example, Muslim consumers have a plethora of choices: the traditional zabihah butchers available in clusters around the city, as well as chains such as a local grocery store touting a separate halal meat section with beef sausages, steaks, and chuck roasts. A French bistro even unveiled a specialty halal, alcohol-free menu with filet mignon, ribeye steaks, and classic béarnaise sauces in the past year. Around the nation, a halal chicken and beef supplier has already broken into huge superstore chain freezer sections. New York vendors proudly sell gyros from halal carts that are popular with all busy lunch-goers, not just customers sticking to religious tenets.

The concept isn’t limited to meat, either. There are halal alternatives for foods such as gummy bears, vitamins, and vanilla extract which can all normally contain pork or alcohol, two of the “forbidden ingredients” in Islam.

“We have come a long way. People from my generation, who came here back in the 70s, used to go to farms to slaughter their own goats and cows. They don’t have to do that anymore,” reflects Dr. Muhammad Munir Chaudry, president of the Islamic Food and Nutrition Council of America (IFANCA®).

The biggest boon seems to be the popularity of Saffron Road at Whole Foods groceries. The high-end retailer uses the array of IFANCA halal-certified frozen entrees—ranging from chicken biryani and samosas to pad Thai and Moroccan lamb stew—as the center of its Ramadan advertisement.

The advent of availability of halal options isn’t just retailers wanting to appeal to diversity; it’s also a sound business decision.

“There’s [over] one billion Muslims in the world,” explains Errol Schweizer, executive global grocery coordinator for Whole Foods. “It’s fun to be one of the firsts to market to them. It’s something we took really seriously.”

Adnan Durrani, founder and chief executive officer of the American Halal Co. Inc., which owns Saffron Road, started the company because he saw a gap that he could fill. “We started with the premise that the American-Muslim community is a very vibrant, affluent, educated community.” He continues, “It has dynamic demographics and traits to it that are different from any Muslim community in the world.”

Durrani was in the food business long before creating the brand Saffron Road, and he used the same principles that attracted him to the niche. He wanted to reach out to the potential two hundred billion dollar a year in buying power that he saw, and he wanted to appeal to discerning consumers. His plan was to entice educated millennials who were looking for high standards in cuisine that also just happened to be Islamically compliant.

“A lot of the discipline I got for social responsibility was from my Jewish friends; they were promoting businesses that were giving back to the community and giving back to society,” he adds. “If we were going to promote and build a halal enterprise, it needed to be socially responsible and be dedicated to ethical consumerism.”

That attention to making products organic, antibiotic-free, and hormone-free drew Whole Foods, states Schweizer, because the chain only markets items that follow its ethical outlines.

The high quality standards that Cabot Creamery puts into its cheeses and dairy is also what prompted both Cabot and IFANCA to pursue certifying items as halal.

Nate Formalarie, brand communications manager for Cabot, explains that the company didn’t actually have to change any of its practices. The farmers were already using non-animal based rennet, or enzymes, for ages-old cheese recipes, so the processes IFANCA was seeking were inherent to the standards Cabot was previously following.

Plus, since the company is a cooperative of farmers, it wanted to broaden its base as much as possible to give back profits to them. “We wanted to be available to the widest group of consumers as possible,” he continues. “We’re wanting to be inclusive of all.”

However, as much progress as halal foods have made toward being in the mainstream, there’s still a ways to go to make items readily available.

Saqib Shafi, who runs the Muslim Eater website, led what can be seen as a revolutionary moment when he posted a listing of restaurants that use beef from a supplier of halal beef. This opened up the doors for those who couldn’t before enjoy certain high-end venues.

Some restaurants embraced the idea of catering to the Muslim population. “The term [halal] is now more popular,” Shafi says. “The chefs themselves have heard of it in training, and now they have this realistic diner that’s coming in. It’s something exciting for chefs to take on, a challenge for them culinarily.”
Much of this will only happen, however, if customers take it into their own hands to stipulate what they want. “Consumers are not really forceful in demanding halal,” Dr. Chaudry says. “It’s changing, but it’s not changing fast enough for the industry to realize that there are seven, eight million of us [Muslims] that exist.”

Grocery stores, for example, want to know what their customer base is. If they’re in a neighborhood with a large Hispanic population, they will make an effort to provide fare that will be appealing. The same goes if Muslims make it clear they want to buy specialty items at their local stores. “If a supermarket realizes they are next to a big Islamic center and they have hundreds of people coming out of a mosque on a Friday and going right into the grocery store, they will carry more [halal] products,” Dr. Chaudry advises. “It’s up to us to let those stores know, ‘you’re not carrying such and such products.’ Overall, Muslims are not confronting the issue.”

Any company has customer service agents ready to handle these kinds of requests, he continues. If a shop receives enough calls and emails, those concerns will move through the chains to become an actuality. “You have to be an active consumer. Nobody is going to do that on your behalf,” he adds.

While some retailers may show hesitancy, most are willing to do the research if it means bringing in business.

Vendors are also savvier these days on how to deal with any potential issues. They have departments dedicated solely to public relations and social media. Durrani learned from others’ mistakes that not being transparent will make customers suspicious. When Saffron Road launched in 2011, Durrani went into it prepared to combat anyone

---

Others didn’t want to take the extra step to guarantee specific meat, since they bring in cuts from various farms. “They don’t want to jump into it; it’s just a logistical concern,” Shafi concedes.

However, Shafi would like to see more retailers taking on providing items to all its customers. “The goal and desire all of us [Muslims] have is that you can walk into a [supermarket] anywhere in the country and you can get a halal product,” he expands. This especially appeals to him because he promotes home cooking over eating out, and the ease of heading to a corner store rather than a specialized butcher would make it easier, for novice cooks especially, to create their own meals.

Dr. Chaudry agrees that it’s heartening to see the market expanding, but there’s still a ways to go. Although it’s slowly and gradually changing, especially in the last decade, Muslim-focused food in the United States is still seen as an export business, he expounds.

Ideally, Dr. Chaudry would like to see a national logo so that consumers can easily identify items that are made for them. While IFANCA provides certification to companies and products, there’s no standardized system yet.

“We still treat grocery stores as libraries; we stand around reading labels,” he laments. “If the average American takes 30 minutes to [buy] groceries, Muslim families take two hours. That will change once a logo is standard.”

There are also outstanding questions a standardization can answer, such as what producers mean when they say meat is zabiba: hand-slaughtered versus machine-slaughtered, if a Muslim is in charge of the butchering, etc.

There are halal alternatives for foods such as gummy bears, vitamins, and vanilla extract which can all normally contain pork or alcohol, two of the “forbidden ingredients” in Islam. Many of these products are readily available and easy to purchase online, but for those who prefer to shop in person, there are options available at many grocery stores and specialty shops.

If you’re interested in trying halal alternatives, there are many options available online through companies like Saffron Road and Durrani. These companies provide a variety of products that are certified halal and are easy to purchase and prepare.

---

Dr. Chaudry advises. “It’s up to us to let those stores know, ‘you’re not carrying such and such products.’ Overall, Muslims are not confronting the issue.”

Any company has customer service agents ready to handle these kinds of requests, he continues. If a shop receives enough calls and emails, those concerns will move through the chains to become an actuality. “You have to be an active consumer. Nobody is going to do that on your behalf,” he adds.

While some retailers may show hesitancy, most are willing to do the research if it means bringing in business.

Vendors are also savvier these days on how to deal with any potential issues. They have departments dedicated solely to public relations and social media. Durrani learned from others’ mistakes that not being transparent will make customers suspicious. When Saffron Road launched in 2011, Durrani went into it prepared to combat anyone
who could raise ire. He gave his army of bloggers and Tweeters what they needed: the facts. Plus, they had the backing of others who also enjoyed their meals.

“A lot of non-Muslims are buying our products for the adventure,” he boasts. Additionally, if they have practicing friends they want to invite to break the fast during Ramadan, it gives them a place to begin when searching for a meal.

And while halal doesn’t necessarily correlate to organic or better quality, those concepts can go hand-in-hand if desired. “Both in halal and kosher, you may have companies that violate the high standards,” Durrani explains. “We set very high standards and very high transparency.”

He also fully believes that halal should mean expecting excellence. “It should be the purest and the most humane standard,” he says.

NADIA MALIK holds a degree in journalism and is a former reporter for a Chicago-area newspaper. She has written for websites and publications and has also worked for several non-profit organizations.
After every meal, my father would carefully and meticulously pick up each fallen crumb off the dining table with his fingertips. He would then make sure every morsel was eaten and nothing was left behind.

As a child, I did not think much of this habit until one day he finally decided to tell me why he did it. When he was growing up, he had suffered extreme hunger, which taught him to treasure even the tiniest bite. This way of valuing food has stuck with me even to this day.

When I first got married, asking my mother for her recipes required doing too much math. She regularly cooked for our family of six, and I needed to reduce her portions down to only my husband and me. As an amateur cook, I would end up making far more than was needed and have too many leftovers. Sometimes, it would take us an entire week to finish one meal in order to avoid wasting any food.

Not only does wasting food go against our beliefs, it has many negative effects on the environment. Food waste is just what it sounds like: any food substance that is discarded—be it raw, cooked, solid, or liquid. It is the second largest category of municipal solid waste sent to landfills in America according to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). That is over 30 million tons of food waste a year! How are we as individuals contributing to this number and what can we do to reduce food wastage?

For starters, it is important to plan meals ahead. Grocery shopping should be done on a weekly basis, so fresh food is coming into the house regularly. This way, only a few meals are planned at a time, and there is not an abundance of food stored in the freezer or pantry. Often times, food items end up expiring or going bad from not being consumed. It is estimated that 25 to 40 percent of the food that is grown, processed, and transported in the United States never reaches the plate. Let us not add more to this statistic.

One of the first things I decided to avoid in my quest to minimize food waste was over-ordering my meat. Instead of getting the meat packaged in excess, I simply ordered the meat in half-pound bags. That way, whenever I cooked I did not overdo the amount of meat I needed. I also made sure to reorder every few weeks to reduce storage. Now as a family of five, we need a little more than half-pound portions of meat, but I do try to follow the same method. I try to keep our meat intake less and serve it with plenty of fresh vegetables, rice, pasta, or lentils.

However, when planning to host a party or an event, estimating how much food to serve can be a challenge. It is important not to go overboard. In the case of leftovers, independent fitness coach Amani Rimawi encourages her guests to foil up unfinished plates and take food home with them. “I try to make sure all my guests take seconds of everything,” says Rimawi, who lives in southern Indiana with her husband and three children. “If there is still quite a bit of food left over, then I have them pack food to-go.”

Rimawi also shares that after an event at her children’s school, leftover platters are taken to a local food shelter to prevent food wastage. “This gives the kids an opportunity to serve others as well as recognize and appreciate food as a blessing,” she says.

To ensure my own children avoid wasting food, I send healthy lunches from home with them, as hot lunches may not always include food they prefer or offer halal options. On the days they might not finish their homemade lunch at school, they make sure to finish it after school. Part of dinner planning the night before includes keeping next day lunches in mind. I try to make just enough so I can pack leftovers for the kids and my husband to take with them to school and work.

Sometimes, this may require being creative. Houston resident and fiction author Afshan Malik, 30, is a mother of four under the age of 7. She finds ways to make old foods look and taste new for her little ones.

“It’s all about ‘re-inventing,’” says Malik with a smile. “To keep things fresh and interesting, I will take our leftovers and make them into a casserole or rice dish. Sometimes I’m even able to make creative wraps and tacos out of old dishes. The kids eat them up happily, and we are able to avoid wasting food as a family.”

As for over ripe fruit or uneaten vegetables, juicing or making smoothies is always a great option. I keep over ripe fruits like bananas in the fridge or freezer and just pop them out and blend them with some almond milk to make a quick and easy dessert. I like to avoid sugary drinks, so I take any extra produce from the fridge and...
make healthy fresh juices for the family. Juicing has become a regular staple in our home. If anything is leftover, it is fun to make juiced ice pops or freeze smoothies-on-a-stick for enjoyment another day.

So what about food that is thrown away then? According to the Feeding America organization, when food waste decomposes in a landfill, it rots and generates a potent greenhouse gas called methane, which has 21 times the global warming potential of carbon dioxide. One-third of all methane emissions in the United States come from landfills. Methane gas is produced in a landfill when the municipal solid waste buried in it does not receive oxygen.

To help reduce methane emissions, eleven-year-old Mariam Shaikh of Lisle, Illinois, suggests composting uneaten food and other organic or nature-made items instead of throwing them away. Her robotics team recently won the rookie award for their project on managing waste. One solution she found in her research was the use of composting. Unlike a landfill, a compost pile undergoes aerobic decomposition. By turning the pile or using worms and other living organisms, the pile is exposed to oxygen and produces carbon dioxide instead of methane. If the pile is taken care of properly, it will produce far less methane than a landfill.

“The problem is that people don’t know how much damage they can do to the earth,” says Shaikh. “It’s important to educate ourselves and our community about our environment. Even as one person, I have learned I can make a difference and be part of the solution,” she says.

The EPA states that when food scraps are properly processed, they can generate renewable energy and feed animals. Composting food waste also produces a natural fertilizer, which can create healthier soil and reduce the need for synthetic fertilizers. It does not require fancy equipment or expensive artificial additives to break down organic scraps and turn them into something useful. You can compost indoors or outdoors, using the resulting soil for your garden, potted plants, or simply your lawn.

Feeding America notes that some of the food waste generated in the United States is not waste at all, as it is safe to eat and actually nutritious. In these instances, it is suggested to donate to food banks and other anti-hunger organizations, keeping it out of landfills while helping those in need.

In the battle against food waste, there are simple and easy solutions we can learn to incorporate into our own homes. Food is a blessing which we must remember to always value. It is important to have mindfulness of the amount of food we waste and gain an understanding of the consequences that arise from trashing it. Even if the changes are small, they can make a big difference in the long-run to increase the longevity and sustainability of our environment, not only for us but for the generations that will come after us.

Through her research, Shaikh learned about the San Francisco Mandatory Recycling and Composting Ordinance, which requires all local residents to separate their recyclables, compostable items, and landfill trash into bins for curb-side pickup. Mandated in 2011, it became the first local municipal ordinance in the United States to universally require source separation of all organic material, including food residuals. Today, San Francisco has saved 78 percent of its trash from landfills due to composting. This inspired Shaikh and her teammates, which includes her eight-year-old brother Yusuf, to start a petition to their local government to introduce a similar ordinance in Illinois. In 48 hours, they obtained over 500 signatures.

TAYYABA SYED is an award-winning author and journalist whose work has been featured in numerous publications, including NPR. She recently co-authored her first children’s book. She lives with her husband and three children in Illinois.
TIPS TO KEEP FROM TOSSELLING FOOD

Don’t buy in bulk! When it comes to food, only buy what you need for the week.

Pack a sack lunch! Send your kids to school with a lunch containing only the foods you know they like and will eat.

Be creative with leftovers! If your family does not enjoy eating the same meal for dinner two nights in a row, turn night one leftovers into a completely new meal on night two.

Compost! Not sure how to get started? Visit www.howtocompost.org for more information.

Donate! Send any leftover food you have to a local food bank.

The IFANCA app is now available for Android and iPhone/iPad. Just search for the Android app in the Google Play Store and the iPhone/iPad app in the Apple App Store using your device.

THE APP WILL ALLOW YOU TO:
- Read the latest issue of Halal Consumer® magazine
- Access the Halal Consumer® Facebook page
- Read the latest issue of Halal Digest® newsletter
- Contact IFANCA
- Search the certified product database
- Follow IFANCA on Twitter
- Learn more about IFANCA

Go ahead and download the app and send us your feedback.
HALAL-CERTIFIED PRODUCT LOCATOR

Not all of the company products are halal-certified. Look for the Crescent-M logo on the product label or verify the certification using the Certified Products listing on www.ifanca.org.

### HALAL-CERTIFIED PRODUCT LOCATOR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brand</th>
<th>Product Type</th>
<th>Company Name</th>
<th>Available At</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abbott</td>
<td>Nutritional Products</td>
<td>Abbott Nutrition</td>
<td>Supermarkets and drugstores throughout the United States and Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Infant/Baby Food</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Products</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amara</td>
<td>Cosmetics</td>
<td>Baqi Inc.</td>
<td>Visit their website: <a href="http://www.amaracosmetics.com">www.amaracosmetics.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bard Valley</td>
<td>Food Products</td>
<td>Bard Valley Natural Delights</td>
<td>Kroger, Publix, Meijer, Walmart, Whole Foods, and various markets throughout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>the United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabot</td>
<td>Cheese</td>
<td>Cabot Creamery</td>
<td>Supermarkets throughout the United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campbell</td>
<td>Food Products</td>
<td>Campbell Company of Canada</td>
<td>Supermarkets throughout Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carole’s Cheesecake</td>
<td>Bakery Item</td>
<td>Carole’s Cheesecake Company Ltd.</td>
<td>Select markets, restaurants, and bakeries throughout Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Visit their website for a complete list of locations: <a href="http://www.carolescheesecake.com">www.carolescheesecake.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Biscuits</td>
<td>Bakery Items</td>
<td>English Biscuit Manufacturers (Pvt.)</td>
<td>Ethnic (Indo/Pak) stores throughout the United States and Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ltd.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Godiva</td>
<td>Candy / Chocolate</td>
<td>Godiva Chocolatier</td>
<td>Company stores, department stores, supermarkets, gift shops, and drugstores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>throughout the United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golden Bonbon</td>
<td>Candy / Chocolate</td>
<td>Asti Holdings Ltd.</td>
<td>Visit their website: <a href="http://www.goldenbonbon.com">www.goldenbonbon.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J&amp;M Food Products</td>
<td>Food Products</td>
<td>J&amp;M Food Products</td>
<td>Visit their website: <a href="http://www.halalcertified.com">www.halalcertified.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kontos</td>
<td>Bakery Items, Bread</td>
<td>Kontos Foods, Inc.</td>
<td>Ethnic (Arab, Indo/Pak) stores and fruit &amp; vegetable markets throughout the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love &amp; Quiches</td>
<td>Brownies and Cakes</td>
<td>Love and Quiches Desserts</td>
<td>Visit their website for outlets:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.loveandquiches.com">www.loveandquiches.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand</td>
<td>Product Type</td>
<td>Company Name</td>
<td>Available At</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mead Johnson</td>
<td>Infant/Baby Food Products</td>
<td>Mead Johnson</td>
<td>Department stores, supermarkets, and drugstores throughout the United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melaleuca</td>
<td>Personal Care Products</td>
<td>Melaleuca, Inc.</td>
<td>Visit their website for distributors: <a href="http://www.melaleuca.com">www.melaleuca.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melaleuca</td>
<td>Nutritional Supplements</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Own Meals</td>
<td>Food Products</td>
<td>My Own Meals</td>
<td>Visit their website: <a href="http://www.myownmeals.com">www.myownmeals.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>Food Products</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>Sauces &amp; Dressings, Condiments</td>
<td>National Foods Limited</td>
<td>Ethnic (Indo/Pak) stores throughout the United States and Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>Dessert Mixes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>Spices &amp; Seasonings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nestle</td>
<td>Food Products</td>
<td>Nestle Pakistan Ltd.</td>
<td>Ethnic (Indo/Pak) stores throughout the United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nestle</td>
<td>Beverages / Beverage Concentrates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nestle</td>
<td>Dairy Products</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nestle</td>
<td>Drink Mixes, Dessert Mixes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutrilite</td>
<td>Nutritional Supplements</td>
<td>Access Business Group, LLC</td>
<td>Visit their website for distributors: <a href="http://www.nutrilite.com">www.nutrilite.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olympia</td>
<td>Gyros, Flat Bread</td>
<td>Olympia Food Industries, Inc.</td>
<td>Ethnic (Arab, Indo/Pak) stores and restaurants throughout the United States and Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organic Valley</td>
<td>Dairy Products</td>
<td>Cropp Cooperative/Organic Valley</td>
<td>Supermarkets throughout the United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand</td>
<td>Product Type</td>
<td>Company Name</td>
<td>Available At</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POM Wonderful</td>
<td>Beverages / Beverage</td>
<td>POM Wonderful, LLC</td>
<td>Supermarkets throughout the United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Concentrates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tea</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fruits Processed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saffron Road</td>
<td>Food Products</td>
<td>American Halal Co., Inc.</td>
<td>Target, Whole Foods, Kroger, Publix, HEB, and various markets throughout the United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Snack Food</td>
<td></td>
<td>Visit their website to locate a store near you: <a href="http://www.saffronroadfood.com">www.saffronroadfood.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Appetizers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunrider</td>
<td>Personal Care Products</td>
<td>Sunrider International</td>
<td>Visit their website for distributors: <a href="http://www.sunrider.com">www.sunrider.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cosmetics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Food Products</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nutritional Supplements</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom’s of Maine</td>
<td>Personal Care Products</td>
<td>Toms of Maine, Inc.</td>
<td>Department stores, supermarkets, and drugstores throughout the United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wonderful</td>
<td>Pistachios and Almonds</td>
<td>Paramount Farms</td>
<td>Supermarkets and drugstores throughout the United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Halal Consumer is a quarterly publication of the Islamic Food and Nutrition Council of America (IFANCA)

www.ifanca.org

IFANCA's registered halal-certification logo is the Crescent-M. IFANCA halal-certified products are authorized to display the Crescent-M logo on the halal-certified product labels. The Crescent-M logo may appear alone or with additional information as shown above. All forms displayed are registered trademarks of the Islamic Food and Nutrition Council of America.

HalalConsumer
ifanca4halal
@ifanca
halal@ifanca.org