26 Halalification—More Than a Pinch of Imagination
J&M® halal certified meals use only wholesome ingredients and have NO MSG, NO SOY, and NO ARTIFICIAL FLAVORS OR COLORS. 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 & 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.

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.

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

CHICKEN MEDITERRANEAN: A hearty chicken meal with the flavors of the Mediterranean region. It has chunks of light and dark chicken meat, tomatoes, potatoes, chickpeas, and black olives in a tangy sauce.

CHICKEN & NOODLES: A winning combination with chunks of light and dark chicken meat, homestyle Kluski noodles, peas and carrots in a lightly seasoned sauce.

CHICKEN & BLACK BEANS: A scrumptious meal with chunks of light and dark chicken meat, black & kidney beans, tomatoes, potatoes, sweet peppers and corn. Simple spicing brings out its full flavor.

BEEF STEW: A satisfying and delicious stew! It has chunks of lean beef, with potatoes, sweet peppers, tomatoes, cabbage, zucchini, chickpeas and carrots in a flavorful sauce.

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

PASTA WITH GARDEN VEGETABLES: This delicious and robust meal has rotini pasta with peppers, mushrooms, zucchini and tomatoes. It is perfectly flavored with traditional Italian seasonings.

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

CHEESE TORTELLINI: Cheese-filled tortellini are simply delicious in a well-seasoned tomato sauce, with the added protein and texture of pinto beans.

FLORENTINE LASAGNA: A meal influenced by the tastes of Florence. Savor the combination of small lasagna noodles in a tomato sauce with Ricotta and Parmesan cheeses, spinach and pinto bean pieces which add texture and protein.
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Assalamu Alaikum,

Summer, summer, summertime. It’s hot, the days are long. God-willing Ramadan has been treating you well. Only a few days remain. Have you been re-hydrating yourself with “Summer’s Favorite Melon”?

Of course, I’m talking about watermelon. Did you know there are more varieties than just “regular” and seedless? Imagine my surprise at the last BBQ I attended when the big, green watermelon was cut open to reveal bright yellow flesh!

Many of us make online purchases at least some of the time; it’s a lot easier to buy the kids’ Eid gifts that way over dragging them all to the toy store! But have you ever considered purchasing your groceries via the web? Check out “Store-to-Door: The Convenience of Grocery Delivery” to see what you might be missing.

Once you get your groceries home, do you store everything in the fridge? That might not be the best place for certain items. In “Battle Royale,” find out which food storage method is best for your items.

We’ve heard the saying, “When you eat better, you feel better.” It goes a little deeper than a fatty double cheeseburger weighing you down. Learn more about the connection between food and your brain in “What Are You In The Mood For?”

In “Halalification — More Than a Pinch of Imagination,” you’ll find out how some cooks are making creative substitutions for a cultural array of foods that traditionally contain haram (forbidden) ingredients. It’s more than just replacing pork with halal beef.

Remember when brown rice became all the rage? Then the tables turned and quinoa became the big “it” grain? Though both are still widely consumed today, their trend value has decreased. Avocado, kale, and coconut have been popular for years and are still going strong. Find out why these fruits and vegetable are part of “The Trend That Won’t End.”

There are lots of recipes in this issue. Give them a try and let us know what you think via Facebook or Twitter! We love to hear from you!

May the rest of your Ramadan be filled with reflection, prayer, and many blessings. We wish you a very happy Eid and hope to see you at the first ever Eid Expo at Chicago’s Navy Pier. There will be Eid prayers and a variety of activities for the whole family. For more info, visit www.EidExpo.com.

Happy Reading!

Sincerely,

Alia Shalabi content manager
From the Publisher’s Desk

Assalamu Alaikum,

In the food industry, consumer trends guide what food manufacturers produce. One might say the “consumer is king” when it comes to the variety and availability of food products. Of course, consumer trends vary in different parts of the world and the multinational food companies develop and market products to each region based on their needs and preferences.

Over the years, halal preferences have been voiced by both consumers and regulators in Muslim majority countries, and the food industry has responded to those preferences. The United States food industry is a major supplier of food to the Muslim majority countries and has produced halal-certified products to meet the needs of those consumers. Yet these same halal-certified products that are being exported are not available in the United States. Why is that? Is it because American Muslims are not voicing their need for such products? Or is the food industry ignoring those requests?

There are many examples of the industry responding to consumer trends. In Canada, the industry is marketing a wide variety of halal-certified food products. Canada’s halal consumers can find the products they need in mainstream supermarkets as well as in ethnic shops. In the United Kingdom as well, a wide variety of halal-certified products are available, again in mainstream supermarkets as well as ethnic shops. In South Africa, not only are halal-certified products available in supermarkets and ethnic shops, but many restaurants serve halal products.

In the Muslim majority countries you can find Western foodservice icons serving halal products. They are so successful that local imitators have sprung up with similar names, trying to attract customers. Both are flourishing.

Coming back to the United States, one has to wonder why it is generally difficult to find halal options outside of a limited number of ethnic shops and eateries. It is more puzzling when one considers the popularity of halal food with non-Muslims, as evidenced by the long lines at some of the popular halal food carts.

Consumers voice their preferences with their shopping dollars and their communications. Buying halal-certified products sends a clear message that consumers want halal products; but it doesn’t convey the foregone opportunity when the desired halal products are not available. Asking food manufacturers, food distributors, store managers, and foodservice managers to produce, market, and stock halal products helps them understand the forgone opportunity and gives them the feedback they need to produce the optimum product mix.

We are all in this together, and the system works best when we all play our roles and contribute to the process. Bon appétit!

Sincerely,

Muhammad Munir Chaudry president

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Avocado, Kale, and Coconut: The Trend That Won’t End

By Amani Jabbar
Creamy avocado, verdant kale, and tropical coconut are foods that are now seen regularly on restaurant menus and frequently on the shopping lists of home cooks. With an emphasis on super foods, and the desire for many of us to get the most nutritional bang for our buck, foods such as kale, coconut, and avocado were able to gain popularity; it’s now difficult to recall an era when these foods were seldom seen in mainstream grocers. Now, even years after they first saw a rise in demand, these foods are still as sought after as ever. While avocado, kale, and coconut offer an abundance of nutritional benefits, that’s not the only reason they have remained so popular. Many chefs and home cooks have discovered the versatility that these foods offer, and food manufacturers have also come up with new and interesting products featuring these culinary superstars.

**Avocado** is a nutrient-dense food. “Avocados are rich in monounsaturated fats which are heart healthy and help decrease LDL, or ‘bad cholesterol,’ levels,” according to YaQutullah Ibraheem Muhammad, a registered dietitian residing in Atlanta, Georgia. Avocados also contain phytonutrients that help prevent cancer.

**Kale** is a low calorie food packed with vitamins and nutrients. “Kale provides about two-and-a-half grams of fiber per serving and is also a source of vitamins A, C, K, and the B vitamin folate,” says Muhammad. Kale is also high in nutrients that promote eye health.

**Coconut** is also nutrient-dense, as its water is rich in electrolytes and minerals such as copper, calcium, and iron. Additionally, “Coconut meat and water contain about seven-and-a-half percent of your daily required levels of potassium,” according to Muhammad. Surprisingly, that’s more of the brain boosting mineral than found in bananas.

The unexpected flexibility of these items proves to be a major draw for home cooks. While most of us are familiar with avocado’s usage in guacamole, some cooks have begun experimenting with avocados in a variety of ways. “Avocado provides a smooth and creamy texture to smoothies, dips, and sauces,” says Muhammad. Try adding a bit of this fruit to your blender the next time you whip up a fruit smoothie. The addition of avocado will provide creaminess as well as a healthy dose of good fats. Some have begun using avocado as an alternative to butter and mayonnaise, enjoying this mashed fruit on toast, as a spread on sandwiches, and even in pasta dishes. Try adding some mashed avocado in place of mayonnaise the next time you prepare deviled eggs or potato salad.

Avocado also pairs surprisingly well with chocolate. Recipes for chocolate pudding, mousse, and even truffles have been developed featuring this fruit, and they are easy to find on popular recipe sites. The addition of avocado keeps these desserts decadent tasting without the use of heavy cream or butter.

**Avocado also pairs surprisingly well with chocolate.**

Kale also provides home cooks with a variety of options. Ariel Bornè, a teacher originally from Baltimore, Maryland, has been cooking with kale for many years. “I grew up eating a lot of kale as a dinner vegetable as a child,” states Bornè. “My father would purchase it by the bushel from the farmer’s market, and we children would clean and help my mother to prepare it.” Bornè continues to use this green leafy vegetable in her dishes. “Kale is great in smoothies, salads, sautéed as a side dish, and even baked,” she states. One of Bornè’s favorite side dishes is a simple sauté of fresh kale with garlic and onions; a bit of honey can also be added for those who are sensitive to kale’s natural bitterness. She also loves the fact that kale is ideal for those with food sensitivities and allergies, as it is not a common allergen. Muhammad enjoys baking kale in the oven to create crisp kale chips, which are a great substitute for high-calorie potato chips.

For those on the lookout for new and interesting snack options, kale products are a healthy alternative to traditional treats. Offering a faster option than preparing your own, store-bought kale chips are available in many supermarkets. They come in flavors ranging from Ranch to Nacho Vegan Cheese.” Kale crackers have also recently appeared on the scene. Featuring wholesome ingredients like kale, sea salt, flax seeds, carrots, and seasonings, kale crackers are a smart snack option.
Coconut is a food that has endless options. Bornè admits, “I would eat fresh coconut from the shell as a summer treat as a child. As I got older, I learned to recognize the flavor of coconut in many Caribbean, Indian, and Thai dishes.” Bornè also uses many coconut-based products in her home kitchen. More mainstream grocery stores have begun keeping coconut-based products in stock. Coconut milk and coconut cream add a richness to stews, soups, sauces, and curries. Many vegan chefs also use these items as substitutes for dairy items in recipes. Coconut oil is a great swap for butter in cooked and baked dishes and adds a slightly sweet and fruity flavor to savory dishes. Coconut amino acids are another item that have increased in usage. Made from fermented coconut tree sap, they are a low-sodium liquid seasoning that’s a great substitute for soy sauce and provides an ideal alternative for those looking to avoid soy-based foods. Coconut wraps are another interesting item that have been spotted. These wraps, made with coconut meat, coconut water, and Himalayan sea salt, are a low-carb alternative to traditional flour tortillas. With less than eight grams of carbohydrates per wrap and free from gluten, they are ideal for diabetics and those following a gluten-free diet. These new items have kept consumers interested, and more products will likely continue to pop up as more manufacturers discover the usefulness of this fruit.

Looking at the nutritional benefits and wide variety of uses of these foods, it’s easy to see why avocado, kale, and coconut have continued to rise in popularity. The next time you’re craving a chocolate dessert, try out a recipe for avocado chocolate truffles. If you prefer a crunchy snack, kale chips can satisfy your craving. These alternatives offer health benefits and will keep you on trend.

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On the advice of her daughter, Carolyn Keish signed up for weekly grocery deliveries through Peapod.com, an online retailer that brings necessities right to her home. The delivery person even unloads the items straight to her kitchen so she doesn’t have to worry about picking up heavy bottles of juice and iced tea.

The service has been a life-changer for Keish, who was weary of walking through long aisles with two bad knees and a cane. “It’s hard for me to go into a grocery store, pack the car, and carry [the groceries] into the house,” she explains.

She also doesn’t have to worry about the severe winter weather in her Wisconsin hometown, alleviating fears of slipping and falling in the snow and ice.

Peapod is one of the strongholds of online grocery and food delivery services, established in 1989. But, the past few years have seen a major growth in websites that offer the convenience of buying staples from a laptop or phone. A survey by Brick Meet Click, released in March of this year, finds that one in five shoppers in the United States buys groceries over the Internet and two in five have at some point.

Randy Evins, senior principal of IVE Food and Drug at SAP Retail, which provides software for retailers, maintains there are three reasons for people to turn to the Internet for food needs: “to get a specific product they cannot easily find in a store they frequent; for added convenience; or for subscription-based services that help ensure regularly used products are always on hand.”

While these innovations are a blessing for older consumers like Keish, who is in her 60s and looking for an easier way to go about her tasks, they’ve especially been embraced by younger customers who crave alternatives to standing in a line after a long day of work or caring for children.

“The sweet spot [is] young families,” says Barry Clogan, senior vice president of business consulting services at MyWebGrocer, which helps retailers with product dissemination, among other things. “It’s that flexibility and
convenience that customers want. That’s where you get loyal customers.”

Because big names have introduced lines such as Amazon Fresh and Google Express, which transport anything from quinoa to bananas overnight, smaller companies have had to up their game in the past few years so that they don’t go the way of Circuit City and Borders. They must stay competitive or risk becoming extinct. The advent of companies like Instacart, especially, which promises goods in an hour with the help of personal shoppers that are at your beck and call, has kept big box chains on their toes. Even mom-and-pops understand the importance of a web presence.

For his four-year-old daughter, sitting with her dad and choosing items on an iPad is already the norm. “She’s probably shopped more times that way than in a physical grocery store,” he adds.

Customers who are planning for a special event or experimenting with new recipes don’t have to bring hand-written lists to their local supermarkets and scramble through rows of food for ingredients they may not find; they’re able to browse potential recipes and click on items they want sent to them on one device, all while sitting on their couches, during their lunch breaks at work, or even on the train on the way home from work.

Nancy Youssef, a Chicago-based physician who works 13-hour days, simply doesn’t have the time she’d like to hit up a local shop, so if the vendors can come to her instead, she’s happy to take them up on that offer. “Sometimes I’m too exhausted on my days off to be running to these grocery stores and taking the time to cook and clean,” she says. Instacart has also come in handy when she was too ill to be able to leave the house.

Youssef has also recently embraced Blue Apron, which delivers ingredients for meals on a weekly basis. The company and its ilk are the latest iterations in online

1 in 5 shoppers in the U.S. buys groceries over the Internet

“Customers expect to engage with a brand whatever way they want,” Clogan expounds. “If you don’t engage with them online, you lose a certain amount of loyalty and wallet share.”
convenience that push reluctant or busy cooks to embrace the idea of a homemade dinner. Those interested sign up, choose foods they don’t want included (for those with dietary restrictions), pick how many people will be eating, and decide on the number of entrees a week they want to receive. They then are provided with fresh vegetables, meats, and spices along with step-by-step recipe cards that have pictures of the process (chopping, blanching, and sautéing) and the final product. The meals are proportioned and usually take less than an hour to prepare, and each box comes with everything necessary to whip up dinner, except for small staple items such as salt, pepper, and olive oil.

Youssef is of Egyptian descent, and her husband has an Indian background. Both were looking for alternatives to fare they had eaten their whole lives. “It’s nice to just have some new ideas,” she expands. “It’s easy, but I have learned some new techniques and new ideas about how to make food, about how to cook certain kinds of food.” The site also comes with videos for anyone who is fuzzy on a cooking technique or wants to learn more.

Samina Yousuf, a Bloomington, Illinois, resident who also wanted to expand beyond a Pakistani palate, went through a year of Blue Apron recipes. “It’s actually really fun to make the meals because they’re usually very different from what I would usually cook,” she says. Adding to the fun? The fact that she and her husband would make the meals together.

Because her family eats zabiha halal meat, she opted for a fish and vegetarian menu. While she was exposed to many recipes she wouldn’t have tried otherwise, Yousuf concedes the lack of meat is one of the reasons she is momentarily stopping deliveries.

But, like others who have signed up for Blue Apron or the newer Plated, Yousuf appreciates the expansion of her culinary palate (such as exposure to fennel, which she had never tried before), that the portion sizes are controlled, and that the meals are balanced and healthy. And, because ingredients come in exactly the helpings needed, there’s no waste.

“I had very few meals that we didn’t eat or we didn’t like,” she adds. The quality ingredients and the metered-out spice selections meant tasty, fresh cuisine. Plus, the price, for Yousuf, came to be about the same as she would have spent in any given week at a store but with less hassle.

The price is a selling point for Keish, as well, who finds Peapod rates comparable to what she would find otherwise, and the delivery cost is low enough to compensate for the convenience. She also doesn’t have to worry about being swayed by unnecessary items that come with shopping in a physical building. “You end up purchasing more than what you came for,” she says.

However, Clogan contends that online retailers can still entice consumers with new products, so they’re not losing out on that facet of face-to-face interaction. Anyone who has purchased on Amazon knows that the site will offer recommendations, and food-related merchants are no different.

The bottom line is that convenience is the key for most families who likely have both spouses working, so web grocery sales are likely to just keep expanding.

“When you’re busy at home thinking ‘how am I going to have time to go grocery shopping and cook,’” Youssef explains, “this is where the help comes in.”

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WHAT ARE YOU IN THE MOOD FOR?

By
Shireen Hakim, RDN, MPH, MS
It’s 5 p.m., time for Asr (afternoon) prayer, and you just finished a long day at work. Tired? Cranky? Don’t reach for that bag of halal gummy bears or cup of Joe just yet. With candy or coffee, you’ll only get 15 minutes of energy before you crash and are left without energy to complete your evening prayers. Instead, go for foods like seeds and nuts that give you long-lasting, gradual boosts of energy and put you in a good mood. How do they do that? They contain tyrosine, an amino acid which is used to produce neurotransmitters like mood-booster serotonin and motivating dopamine. Foods high in sugar, fat, salt, and caffeine also increase dopamine levels, but to a temporary and insatiable degree that causes overeating and fatigue.

The food you eat directly regulates your mood because it activates the neurotransmitters, or chemical messengers, that are responsible for your feelings and emotions. Regularly eating tyrosine-rich foods keeps you happy and stress-free all day long. Ideal sources are plant-based protein sources like seeds (butternut squash, sunflower, sesame, and pumpkin), beans, bananas, avocados, and eggs. Interestingly, Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) enjoyed eating squash, or gourd (Bukhari). (Starchy carbohydrates also provide some tyrosine, but they can promote overeating which can lead to obesity and diabetes.)

Other foods with positive effects on your brain are those containing B vitamins (thiamine, folic acid, and vitamin B12) and omega-3 fatty acids (EPA and DHA). Eating foods rich in B vitamins, including chickpeas, lentils, nuts, whole grains, asparagus, and spinach, is a sure way to feel energized on a consistent basis. In fact, many people use vitamin B12 sprays during the day to give them a natural, gradual source of energy. Once the dopamine and serotonin are in your brain, they need a clear path to travel. That’s where omega-3 fatty acids come in. They are a necessary part of the cells that carry neurotransmitters throughout the body. A lack of polyunsaturated omega-3 fatty acids in the diet directly leads to decreased brain function and depression. Omega-3 fatty acids, which should be part of your regular diet, are found in the following foods: walnuts, flaxseeds, chia seeds, and wild-caught salmon and tuna.

We all know the importance of drinking water to prevent dehydration, but did you know that without enough water, the brain shrinks and its function declines? Studies show that not drinking enough water causes sleepiness, moodiness, and poor cognitive performance and memory. However, upon drinking a glass of cold water, study participants became alert and happy. “Drink water separately from meals to properly digest,” says world-renowned nutrition and fitness expert Zainab Ismail. Juices and sodas are dangerous alternatives because the sugar and salt in them alarmingly shrink brain cells, causing dehydration and moodiness, according to Dr. Michael Greger of Nutritionfacts.org.

Depressed, tired, or acutely stressed people reach for “junk” food more often than happy people...

It’s important to note that gut function also contributes to mood, as it relays messages of satiety to the brain via the vagus nerve, provided by nutrients. That’s why probiotics, healthy gut bacteria, improve our mood and immunity. Sources include supplements like IFANCA halal-certified 4Life Probiotics and Forever Active Probiotics, and foods like kefir, kombucha, kimchi, and sauerkraut.

For a good night’s sleep eat foods high in melatonin: tart cherries, orange bell peppers, walnuts, flaxseeds, goji berries, and fenugreek. These natural aids become more valuable with age, as melatonin, the hormone that controls the sleep cycle, decreases.

So what’s so bad about the gummy bears that you’ve now tossed in the garbage and the coffee you drained down the sink? Although stimulants like sugar, saturated fat, salt, and caffeine increase dopamine production in your brain, their effect is similar to that of drugs rather than food. They overstimulate reward regions in the brain and promote overeating, according to Appetite, an international research journal specializing in cultural, social, psychological, sensory, and physiological influences on the selection and intake of foods and drinks. Their effect is detrimental because they cause such a heightened dopamine response that your brain gets used to the high levels of dopamine that only junk food provides. That is why when you try not to eat these foods for a while, you feel withdrawal symptoms like moodiness and fatigue. Sugary items also cause fatigue and moodiness because of imbalances in your blood sugar levels, when high levels of insulin quickly remove the sugar from your system. Such high levels of insulin are harmful as well, leading to high cholesterol levels, big appetite, weight gain, depression, etc.
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God instructs us to pray for blessings before and after eating, indicating the significance food has on our bodies and lives.

Foods high in saturated fats like chips, fries, and burgers lower the desire and ability to exercise by impairing receptor signaling, while foods with polyunsaturated (“good”) fats improve energy signals in the brain.

The types of sugar, salt, and fat in your diet are imperative to ensuring a positive and productive mood. Make sure to use natural sources of sugar like honey and applesauce, small amounts of unprocessed salt (like Himalayan), and polyunsaturated sources of fat like olive oil, chia seeds, and flaxseed.

Conversely, your mood affects your food choice and intake. Depressed, tired, or acutely stressed people reach for “junk” food more often than happy people, according to Nutritionfacts.org and Front Psychology. The palatability and mere availability and presence of junk food overides your desire to eat healthy, according to Appetite, so keep sugary snacks and sodas out of your house if you know you are susceptible. Monitor your sleep patterns, activity levels, and optimism so that you don’t reach a negative cycle. Finally, recognize if you are self-treating issues with food, and instead look for more effective tools like counseling.

By affecting your mood, food choices impact your Islamic practice as well. Adab, or good manners, are emphasized in Islam, and it can be difficult to treat others well if you’re not in a good mood. Likewise, you need long lasting energy and rest to perform Islamic practices like Fajr (dawn) prayers, fasting in the month of Ramadan, and performing Hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca). God instructs us to pray for blessings before and after eating, indicating the significance food has on our bodies and lives. When we eat foods recommended to us, especially “Prophetic foods,” they can be “healing in emotional, mental, physical, and spiritual” ways, says Ismail.

So for a stress-free, productive day at work, school, and the masjid (mosque), you now know which foods to reach for and which to shun. You know what to do to keep yourself healthy and happy. The next time you are ready to eat and someone asks you, “What are you in the mood for?” take the question literally. @

SHIREEN HAKIM writes for Halal Consumer and Amanah Fitness. She has been featured on Buzzfeed Health and has appeared on Therapy Cable’s online show “Muslim Mental Health.” Connect with Shireen for nutrition coaching on Facebook @GlutenFreeWriterRD.
Summer's Favorite Melon

By Taskeen Khan
It’s the first barbecue of the summer. The sounds of children yelling as they run through the bright green grass, adults chattering, and a warm breeze weaving through the trees fill your ears. As you walk through the buffet, you pick up a buttery corn on the cob and a juicy hamburger. You’re about to sit with your friends when you realize something is missing from your plate—a slice of watermelon. Just as the vibrant red fruit plays a key role in summer gatherings, it also plays a key role in our health and religion.

Watermelons come in all shapes and sizes. There are Golden Midgets, which weigh only three pounds and have rinds that change from green to bright yellow when ripe; Janosik Watermelon, which are oblong, have yellow flesh, and weigh around 10 pounds; and Hamby Watermelon which have the classic green rind and red flesh. Seedless watermelon, commonly found in grocery stores, are not the product of genetic engineering, but rather of very careful breeding. To create a seedless watermelon, horticulturist breed a regular watermelon, that has 22 chromosomes, with a watermelon that has double the usual amount of chromosomes, 44. The watermelon that comes from this combination are seedless, having only tiny white traces of seeds. This process takes extra time and care, as the seedless watermelon flourish in warmer temperatures than their seeded counterparts. This is why seedless watermelons are often slightly more expensive.

Despite the variety in appearances, all watermelons share certain health benefits. Watermelons are 92 percent water and full of electrolytes. As described by the United States National Library of Medicine, electrolytes help control the amount of water in the body and are lost when we sweat. Consuming watermelons is an ideal way to get back the electrolytes we lose on hot summer days, and in turn keeps us hydrated.

In addition to electrolytes, watermelons have significant amounts of vitamins A, C, and B6, as well as lycopene. So when we eat watermelon, we benefit from each of these nutrients!

Vitamin A contributes to the health of our skin, keeping it moisturized, and also the health of our teeth and tissues. Additionally, it creates the pigments in our retinas and promotes good vision. Vitamin C is another nutrient that keeps the skin strong by healing wounds. These benefits are especially important in the summer, when the constant exposure to bright rays has the potential to damage our skin and eyes.

Key for brain development and function, B6 helps create the hormones that control mood and the body’s natural clock. The body is unable to store B6, so eating watermelon is an easy way to make sure you have a constant source of the vitamin.

Watermelon, as described by science website www.livescience.com, has one of the highest measures of lycopene found in fresh fruits. The redder the flesh, the more lycopene it contains. Lycopene prevents heart disease and cancers of the prostate, breast, lung, bladder, ovaries, colon, and pancreas. Maybe the saying should be changed to “A watermelon a day keeps the doctor away.”

Science books and nutrition booklets aren’t the only texts that praise watermelon; the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him [PBUH]) is said to have enjoyed this summer staple.

Aisha (may God be pleased with her) said that Prophet Muhammad [PBUH] used to eat watermelon with fresh dates (Tirmidhi).

Maybe the saying should be changed to “A watermelon a day keeps the doctor away.”

It’s easy to add this melon to our diets and reap the health and spiritual benefits it offers. You don’t even have to eat it by itself; there are lots of surprising ways to integrate this wonder fruit into your family’s meals.

Watermelon can help create a sweet salsa when combined with carrots, bell peppers, lime, and salt. It also pairs well with chicken and tabouli, or alongside shrimp. Another option is the traditional Arab snack of watermelon slices with Arabic white cheese. For more exciting ways to enjoy watermelon, make sure to check out The Watermelon Board at www.watermelon.org.

Watermelon is a refreshing part of every summer barbecue, get-together, and picnic. But, who knew it had so many health benefits? Be like the Prophet (PBUH) and snack on some watermelon and dates while the season is ripe.

TASKEEN KHAN currently attends UIUC. She has previously written for Huffington Post Teen and Islamic Horizons Magazine. Khan has also won several Silver Keys and honorable mentions in the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards.
Refreshing Watermelon Shrimp Salad
By: YaQutullah Ibraheem Muhammad MS, RDN, LD

Servings: 6

INGREDIENTS

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 pound frozen, fully cooked medium shrimp, thawed
1 medium red onion, julienned
4 cups watermelon, chopped
2 jalapeños, chopped (ribs and seeds removed for less heat)
2 avocados, chopped
juice of 1 lime
1 teaspoon organic honey
⅔ teaspoon pink Himalayan salt
¼ teaspoon black pepper
½ cup fresh cilantro leaves, roughly chopped

DIRECTIONS

1. Heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil in a large pan over medium heat. Sauté shrimp until golden brown and set aside.
2. In a large bowl, combine onion, watermelon, jalapeños, and avocados.
3. In a small bowl, whisk together the lime juice, honey, salt, pepper, and remaining olive oil.
4. Add the dressing and shrimp to the watermelon salad and toss.
5. Top salad with cilantro and set aside for 10 minutes to allow the flavors to mingle.
**Sautéed Kale**

By: YaQutullah Ibraheem Muhammad MS, RDN, LD

**SERVINGS:** 4

**INGREDIENTS**

- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 medium bell pepper, chopped
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- ½ cup celery, chopped
- Salt and pepper to taste
- ½ teaspoon crushed red pepper
- 5 cups fresh kale, ribs removed, coarsely chopped
- 2 cups water
- ½ cup tomato paste
- 1 teaspoon raw sugar
- 3 tablespoons apple cider vinegar

**DIRECTIONS**

1. Heat oil in a pan over medium heat.
2. Sauté garlic, bell pepper, onion, celery, salt, pepper, and crushed red pepper until fragrant.
3. Add kale and cook, tossing, until bright green.
4. Stir in water, apple cider vinegar, tomato paste, and sugar; reduce heat to low.
5. Cover and cook, stirring occasionally, until the kale is tender. Remove from heat.
6. Allow some water to cling to the leaves, as the moisture will help in steaming the kale during cooking.

©
Corn Cakes with Tomato Avocado Relish
By: Annan Shehadi

Servings: 4, makes 10–12 cakes

INGREDIENTS

**Corn Cakes**
- 3 cups raw corn kernels or canned sweet corn
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- ½ cup cornmeal
- ¼ cup red onion, finely diced
- ¼ cup fresh basil leaves, thinly sliced
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- salt and pepper
- 1 jalapeño, seeded and diced
- ½ cup grated Cabot® Cheddar Cheese
- 2 eggs, beaten
- ¼ cup Organic Valley® Organic Buttermilk
- 2 tablespoons Organic Valley® Organic Butter, melted
- ¼ cup canola or vegetable oil

**Tomato Avocado Relish**
- 1 cup tomatoes, diced (or cherry tomatoes, halved)
- 4 green onions, chopped
- 1 jalapeño, seeded and minced
- 1 tablespoon cilantro, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- juice of ½ lime
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 large avocado

DIRECTIONS

1. In a food processor, pulse 1½ cups of corn kernels until the corn is just slightly puréed.
2. In a large bowl, mix the corn purée, remaining corn kernels, flour, cornmeal, onion, basil, baking powder, baking soda, salt and pepper, jalapeño, and cheese.
3. Add the eggs, buttermilk, and melted butter, mixing just enough to combine the ingredients. Do not overmix the batter.
4. Heat a large pan over medium-high heat. Add canola/vegetable oil to lightly coat the bottom.
5. Add one heaping tablespoon of batter at a time into the hot pan. Cook only about four at a time so that they cook evenly. Do not overcrowd them. Fry for 2 to 3 minutes per side or until nice and golden brown.
6. Serve corn cakes warm topped with tomato avocado relish.

For tomato avocado relish, mix all other ingredients before adding avocado.
Perfect Tomato Cream Sauce with Pasta

By: Alia Shalabi

Servings: 4

INGREDIENTS

1. small onion, diced
2. 1 tablespoon olive oil
3. 1 clove garlic, minced
4. 33.5 ounces tomato sauce
5. 1 teaspoon salt
6. ½ teaspoon black pepper
7. 1 teaspoon dried basil
8. 2 tablespoons Organic Valley® Cream Cheese OR Tofutti® Better Than Cream Cheese (Vegan)
9. 1 pound cooked pasta (fettuccine, penne, rigatoni, whatever you like!)

DIRECTIONS

2. Add garlic and sauté for about 30 seconds.
3. Add tomato sauce and bring to a boil.
4. Stir in salt, pepper, and basil. Reduce heat to low and simmer for 10 minutes.
5. Whisk in cream cheese well and heat for a couple more minutes, until heated through and the sauce becomes a nice orange color.
6. Add cooked pasta to sauce and toss gently to coat.

You can also add sautéed shrimp or seasoned halal chicken to this dish. Sautéed mushrooms tossed in is a great way to keep it vegetarian-friendly while making it a more substantial meal. 🍄
Sparkling Pomegranate and Mint Cooler
By: Saira Mohiuddin

Servings: 2–4

INGREDIENTS

- 4 cups pomegranate seeds
- 1 cup water
- 1 cup POM® Wonderful Pomegranate Juice
- 4 tablespoons simple syrup
- 1 bunch mint
- 1 cup sparkling lemonade

DIRECTIONS

1. Blend pomegranate seeds with water; strain mixture into pitcher. Discard remaining seeds.
2. Stir in pomegranate juice and simple syrup.
3. Thinly slice 10 to 15 mint leaves; add to mixture.
4. Stir in sparkling lemonade.
5. Serve over ice; garnish with mint leaves, if desired.
Lemon Kulfi
By: Saira Mohiuddin

Servings: 4-6

INGREDIENTS

- 1 ¼ cup evaporated milk
- 1 ¼ cup sweetened condensed milk
- 1 cup Organic Valley® Organic Heavy Whipping Cream
- 5 slices white bread, cubed
- 1 teaspoon halal vanilla flavor
- zest of 1 lemon
- ½ teaspoon of ground cardamom

DIRECTIONS

1. Blend evaporated milk, condensed milk, heavy whipping cream, vanilla flavor, bread cubes, and lemon zest together.
2. Add cardamom to mixture.
3. Pour into a 9 x 13-inch pan and freeze for 6 to 8 hours.
4. Cut into square portions and serve immediately.
More Than a Pinch of Imagination

By Naazish Yarkhan
When it’s time to “halalize” a French, Puerto Rican, or other ethnic recipe, swapping pork with halal beef or chicken is just the beginning.

Asma Ahad, director of halal market development at IFANCA, calls herself a below average cook and says she has no option but to follow recipes exactly. That is except when it comes to making halal and, so far, she’s had great results. She swears by her halalized Baja Fish Tacos recipe. “These are beer-battered cod fish tacos. It’s a Mexican recipe,” she says. “Substitute the beer with ginger ale and it turns out absolutely delicious. I mix the batter with a one for one swap. The beer gives it the malted, sizzly texture. We are probably missing the malted flavor, but we are still getting that cultured ale taste,” says Ahad, who belongs to a cooking club where culinary skills culminate in an intimate monthly dinner extravaganza.

Recently, Ahad made an Australian recipe, a chocolate mousse log that called for liqueur, a flavored alcohol. She used alcohol-free almond flavor instead. “People could not stop eating it! It was that good,” she says. “When I originally did a 1:1 swap, it was too strong. I now use the almond flavor in half the proportion,” she says.

So just how did she decide what halal alternative to use in her chocolate mousse log? “Anytime you are looking to switch out an ingredient, see what the ingredient does in the recipe,” she says. “I knew the chocolate mousse had eggs, butter, caster sugar, and 70 percent cacao and wanted an ingredient that would bring out their flavors best and complement them as well,” she says.

Ahad tried different kinds of flavors. Hazelnut was also a viable option, but she finally settled on almond. “The almond flavor is so complex and delicious when combined with high quality chocolate and caster sugar. It is so flavorful. When I added almond flavor, you could smell the combination of the almonds, butter, and sugar! My cooking club ladies can have high standards,” she laughs. What’s her one bit of advice when experimenting with a recipe? “When you make a recipe repeatedly, it gets easier.”

In speaking with Ahad, it becomes apparent that switching ingredients successfully is a process involving trial and error. “And lots of taste testing, too,” says expert cook Yvonne Maffei, who has literally written the book on switching out non-halal ingredients. Her new cookbook, My Halal Kitchen, is due out this summer. Of Sicilian and Puerto Rican descent, Maffei’s cooking is an attempt to recreate the flavors and meals of her childhood, as authentically as possible, using halal ingredients. In fact, people who aren’t Muslim have told her they don’t notice the difference when she cooks with halal ingredients. Recreating the foods she’s learned of on her travels through Europe, Mexico, Belize, and Morocco is also a passion. “I grew up tasting a lot of these foods so I know what is a good substitute,” she says.

In French cuisine, for example, sauces typically call for wine as an ingredient. Maffei’s mother loved French food and made breaded chicken with béarnaise sauce, buying pre-made packets of the sauce. “As I studied French cuisine,” says the author who turned her back on pursuing a degree in law, “I realized I could make it from scratch, but it had wine. I used a white grape juice substitute. When we put the sauce over breaded chicken, everyone said it was probably their favorite recipe! We were able to accomplish it without the wine!”

“Tiramisu, for instance, is typically made with rum,” says this chef whose favorite food memory is eating Parisian chocolate desserts from the Eiffel tower restaurant with cousins. “I look at the alcohol being called for in a recipe and determine its original source and use the halal version. Rum comes from sugar cane, so apple juice is a sweet enough substitute. If the recipe calls for white wine, I will consider white grape juice as a substitute.”

Maffei’s cookbook has both traditional favorites and her own original recipes. With all the testing she has done on her recipes, home cooks can embrace global cuisine in halal-only kitchens without being a super foodie. Plus, many of her recipes are easy enough to make during the week. Boeuf bourguignon is a French one-pot dish made with bacon and red wine, made popular in America by Julia Child. In her recipe, Maffei replaces the pork fat with beef fat and adds high quality grape juice instead of wine. “People who ate it couldn’t tell the difference!” she recalls.

“Another recipe everyone goes crazy over is carnitas,” says Maffei. “It is usually made with pork, but I make it with lamb. The fat on the lamb gives the flavor, making the meat really moist. The flavor is still very authentic because of the spices,” she says.

A baker since she was nine, what is a childhood favorite that Maffei has adapted? “On my Sicilian side, it was always spaghetti with meatballs made from a mixture of beef and pork. Now, I really use good quality halal meat. We aren’t missing out on anything as long as we use...
authentic flavorings and spices, and the fat of the animal. And when you cook with bones, it adds a lot of the flavor,” she says.

Farzana Moinuddin, chief accounting officer at Nanosphere and Palatine, Illinois, resident, draws on her Zambia and Zimbabwe heritage, using lots of corn, spinach, and dry fish in her cooking. Moinuddin and her husband love recreating great restaurant food.

“Research why an ingredient is in a recipe,” she too advises. “Ham is for smokiness, for instance. For a BLT, we use halal beef bacon. The turkey bacon is like plastic.” A visit to a not-so-local grocery store is a must for hand-made halal sausage. “It’s about an hour away, but we make a trip out of it,” she says.

One recipe she makes all the time—“It’s so easy”—is pistachio-crusted roast leg of lamb. The original recipe called for half a glass of wine. Unlike Maffei, who used grape juice in place of wine, Moinuddin tested out the recipe using orange juice. Experimenting with different juices will yield a slightly different, but suitable, result, as Moinuddin has discovered. “Now every time a recipe calls for wine, I use pomegranate juice as it has both fruitiness and the tartness. I have improvised that leg of lamb recipe so much since [first making it] but still use the juice as it helps the marinating process.”

When a recipe for pan chicken needed bacon fat, Moinuddin used chicken skin. “I cut it into strips and let it cook in its own fat. I used the fat in my recipe and disposed of the skin. The recipe turned out really good. I have never measured my spices. If something doesn’t work out well, I’ll figure out how to use it to make another dish because I don’t want to waste food,” she says.

Moinuddin used her leg of lamb recipe to make leg of impala (a type of antelope) on her last trip to Zimbabwe. “I cooked a huge chunk of game meat, almost 20 pounds, for six hours. I also used a meat tenderizer, which I normally don’t have to do. I did not know what the end result would be. It turned out amazing!” Her advice? “Be creative. What difference does it make if a dish tastes a little different from the original, so long as it tastes great?”

NAAZISH YARKHAN is a prolific journalist and communications strategist whose work has been featured in over 50 media outlets including NPR, PRI, and Huffington Post. She works with students across the US as a writing and college essay coach. More at WritersStudio.us.

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Use almond flavoring in place of liqueur.

Use apple juice in place of rum.

Use grape juice in place of wine.

**Simple Halal Substitutions:**

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...switching ingredients successfully is a process involving trial and error.

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WWW.IFANCA.ORG
Use halal lamb in place of pork for traditional carnitas.
BATTLE ROYALE
Which Food Storage Method Is Best?

By Suha Najjar, RD, LDN
Before the refrigerator was invented, people used a variety of food storage methods. Some collected ice from mountains, others placed food in brine or salt water, and still others would dig holes in the ground to access the cooler temperatures. Lowering the temperatures of foods prevents or slows the growth of bacteria and ultimately extends the life of the foods.
Interestingly, the first refrigerating system was not used for food but by Dr. John Gorrie in the 1800s to treat his patients who suffered from yellow fever. Early household refrigerators used gases that were later deemed toxic; refrigerators are now safer than before and are used as the primary method of food storage. Additionally, there are a variety of food storage options that secure food from a few hours to 25 years, and for some foods...indefinately.

Why would food storage be so important? Urijah Khadijah Samikun, an Indonesian native living in Durham, North Carolina, describes how she didn’t grow up with a refrigerator or any other method for food storage: “We raised goats, chickens, and ducks and grew some of our own food. Sometimes we made a trip to the market to purchase the food we needed for the day. We cooked and ate the food the same day and covered it with a plastic net to protect it from ants and flies.” As for dairy, she states, “We hardly drank cow’s milk. Mostly coconut and soy milk, which we made on our own as needed.”

We learn from Samikun that survival is not contingent on ice boxes, storage bags, or mason jars. However, at optimal temperatures and with certain packaging methods, food storage facilitates food security by reducing microbial risk and contamination (from air, moisture, and insects). There is less foraging, less food waste, longer shelf life, and probably most desired in today’s fast paced lifestyle—convenience.

There are many forms of food storage for different types of foods. I have already resigned myself that if the zombie apocalypse happened in my lifetime, I would busy myself with prayer and reflection before being torn to shreds. But there is a movement of people who are preparing for emergency disasters by using long term food storage. Nitrogen, dry freezing, dry ice, oxygen absorbers, food saver machines, Mylar bags, and canneries are being used by people who want a long term food source in the event of a catastrophe. For the rest of us who just want to ensure our food doesn’t spoil too quickly, there are other everyday options. Freezer bags, storage containers (glass, metal, and plastic), aluminum foil, and vacuum seals are commonly used.

...foods require a tight seal.

With so many varieties, instead of deciphering what to use, let’s rule out what not to use. BPA (Bisphenol A) is a chemical that many plastics are made from and metal cans are lined with. The negative attention it has received is due to its tendency to leach the chemical into the food it houses. When heating foods in a microwave or placing the containers in the dishwasher, the protective coating on the container degenerates and ultimately allows BPA to leach, potentially causing damage to the brain and
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cheese</td>
<td>39° to 86°F</td>
<td>Unpenetrated packaging; free from mold (in non-moldy varieties)</td>
<td>Plastic wrap or metal foil to reduce drying out, contamination, or odors</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y in lb. or 1” thickness</td>
<td>If mold occurs on hard cheese, you can safely cut it off and eat the remaining cheese; if on soft cheese - discard it.</td>
<td>1 week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chocolate/ Cocoa</td>
<td>65° to 70°F</td>
<td>Completely sealed; on dry, room-temperature shelf</td>
<td>Dry container limiting temperature fluctuations or moisture</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Extreme temperatures and moisture can cause bloom (grayish spot) and lumping</td>
<td>By expiration date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coffee</td>
<td>40°F</td>
<td>**Vacuum-sealed wrapper and tightly sealed container</td>
<td>Tightly sealed after opening with minimal air or moisture exposure</td>
<td>Y up to 40°F maximum</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Freshly ground and roasted is best</td>
<td>3 weeks to avoid staleness and rancidity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eggs</td>
<td>≤45°F</td>
<td>Refrigerated paper carton; clean with no cracks</td>
<td>Wash before use</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y Egg whites N Egg yolks</td>
<td>Failed storage methods or foods with raw eggs can cause salmonella</td>
<td>3-5 weeks from purchase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fresh Fruit Berries/ Cherries</td>
<td>32°F to 34°F</td>
<td>Breathable container with no mold growth</td>
<td>Spread out on a flat surface and only wash before use</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Colder temperatures slow the aging of the fruit Container is not required—these fruits can be purchased individually and kept at room temperature to ripen (applies to citrus, bananas and avocados)</td>
<td>1 day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citrus (except lemon)</td>
<td>55° to 58°F</td>
<td>Free from mold with peel intact Unbruised with peel intact</td>
<td>Cover to avoid drying out Use immediately if ripe; if not ripe, store at room temp for later use</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Frozen temperatures deteriorate product</td>
<td>2 days after ripening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avocados &amp; Bananas</td>
<td>40°F (after ripening)</td>
<td>Unbruised with peel intact; plastic bag with perforations Dull and waxy skin; heavy for its size</td>
<td>Wrap cut up melon in plastic wrap</td>
<td>Y (crisper) dryer</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Melon continues to ripen if not refrigerated upon purchase</td>
<td>Up to 30 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fresh Fruit Berries/ Cherries</td>
<td>≤40°F</td>
<td>Unbruised with peel intact</td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citrus (except lemon)</td>
<td>40°F</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Apples/ Pears (and others)</td>
<td>≤40°F</td>
<td>Unbruised with peel intact</td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melon</td>
<td>40°F</td>
<td>Plastic bag or plastic wrap with butter’s tray and no perforations</td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canned Fruit and Vegetables</td>
<td>≤72°F</td>
<td>Non-punctured, undented can</td>
<td>Once opened, remove from can and store in air tight container</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Do not leave in can once opened; the moisture content can proliferate bacteria</td>
<td>3 days after opening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frozen Fruit and Vegetables</td>
<td>≤0°F</td>
<td>Keep in original packaging</td>
<td>Do not leave in can once opened; the moisture content can proliferate bacteria</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Do not thaw before use</td>
<td>Up to 3 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dried Fruits</td>
<td>Room Temp.</td>
<td>**Vacuum-sealed (removing all moisture from the fruit)</td>
<td>Tight plastic, metal, or glass container to prevent insect infestation</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>*Freeze-drying for taste and nutrients</td>
<td>Low moisture content makes them resistant to microbial spoilage</td>
<td>Up to 2 weeks before starting to turn gritty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meat</td>
<td>Fresh 40°F</td>
<td>Rich pink color In butcher’s wrapping paper Plastic bag or plastic wrap with butcher’s tray and no perforations</td>
<td>Freezer bags loosely wrapped In original store packaging</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Fresh meats should be used or frozen same day Look at expiration dates: avoid brown, gray, or green colored meats</td>
<td>2 days in fridge; up to 3 months in freezer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frozen 0°F</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Y (for thawing)</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td></td>
<td>Up to 6 months in freezer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seafood Fresh</td>
<td>32°F</td>
<td>On bed of flaked ice and wrapped in butcher wrap</td>
<td>Keep in coldest part of refrigerator in butcher wrap until cooked</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Fish are extremely perishable and spoil rapidly</td>
<td>2 days after purchase or place in freezer for later use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seafood Frozen</td>
<td>≤41°F</td>
<td>Completely frozen, in sealed packaging</td>
<td>Freeze immediately in store packaging</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milk</td>
<td>Room Temp.</td>
<td>Covered with clean, non-punctured seals Moisture-proof packaging Unopened, undented, flat top seal can</td>
<td>Replace cap and return to refrigerator after use Once opened, treat as fluid milk</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Opaque container preserves flavor</td>
<td>5 days after “sell by” date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonfat Milk</td>
<td>Room Temp.</td>
<td>Covered with clean, non-punctured seals Moisture-proof packaging Unopened, undented, flat top seal can</td>
<td>Replace cap and return to refrigerator after use Once opened, treat as fluid milk</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Lumpy/stale when exposed to light Turn over to avoid milk solid formation</td>
<td>5 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaporated Milk</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables Moisture Rich-Beans</td>
<td>Fresh Vegetables 40°F</td>
<td>Covered containers or plastic bags Keep beans in pods Unwrapped and not ripe Cool dry place</td>
<td>Keep dry and wrap with paper towel Put in storage bag once opened Allow to ripen before use then wrap and refrigerate remainder Best stored in open area</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Respiration continues after harvest leading to shortened storage time Waxy coating helps to slow respiration Tomatoes are better used when ripe Keep bulbs out of direct sunlight and away from moisture-releasing vegetables</td>
<td>Short storage life, use immediately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomatoes</td>
<td>40°F</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onions, Garlic, &amp; Potatoes</td>
<td>45°F to 55°F</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Packaging upon purchase:**
- **Undented can:** Can be used for undamaged cans.
- **Vacuum-sealed:** Can be used for cans sealed under vacuum.
- **Non-punctured:** Can be used for cans with no punctures.

**After opening:**
- **Home storage:** Can be used for storage in the home.
- **Refrigeration advised?:** Can be used for refrigerated storage.
- **Can it be frozen?:** Can be used for freezing.

**Notes:**
- **Failed storage methods:** Can be used for failed storage methods.
- **Use:** Can be used for usage recommendations.
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.

Danielle Bujan, Pyrex brand lead with World Kitchen, states that heating food in a glass container eliminates health risks. Also, their plastic lids have always been BPA-free. However, Bujan advises removing the lid completely while cooking in an oven, allowing some venting when microwaving foods by leaving the lid loosely on, and washing lids on the top rack of the dishwasher to prevent warping.

Clearly no matter how well food is stored, over time it will spoil. There are many foods that don’t require refrigeration at all: pantry foods like sauce, pasta, and rice. The table on the left shows different storage methods for a variety of foods.

As illustrated in the table, there is no clear cut winner on the food storage front since all foods denature at different rates. However, to maximize freshness one factor remains consistent in all methods—foods require a tight seal. Tight seals prevent food dry-out and also keep moisture, air, and insects out, all which accelerate food spoilage. Food storage and security should not be a gateway to extravagance or wastefulness. Food is to be treated as sustenance and the blessing it is. It is to be protected and eaten, not hoarded or wasted. If you find you have excess food, consider donating it to family, friends, or neighbors and, of course, buying less.

SUHA NAJJAR is a registered and licensed dietitian and nutritionist in North Carolina. She is an advocate of and works in public health and wellness. Currently, Suha is pursuing her master’s in nutritional sciences.
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>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Products</td>
<td></td>
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</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 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>
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<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>
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<tr>
<td>English Biscuits</td>
<td>Bakery Items</td>
<td>English Biscuit Manufacturers (Pvt.) Ltd.</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Godiva</td>
<td>Candy / Chocolate</td>
<td>Godiva Chocolatier</td>
<td>Company stores, department stores, supermarkets, gift shops, and drugstores throughout the United States</td>
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<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>
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<tr>
<td>J&amp;M Food Products</td>
<td>Food Products</td>
<td>J&amp;M Food Products</td>
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<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 United States</td>
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<tr>
<td>Love &amp; Quiches</td>
<td>Brownies and Cakes</td>
<td>Love and Quiches Desserts</td>
<td>Visit their website for outlets: <a href="http://www.loveandquiches.com">www.loveandquiches.com</a></td>
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<td>Mead Johnson Nutritionals</td>
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<td>Melaleuca, Inc.</td>
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<td>Food Products</td>
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<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>
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<td>Canterbury Coffee</td>
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<td>Cropp Cooperative/Organic Valley</td>
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<td>Tea</td>
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<td>Fruits Processed</td>
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<td>Target, Whole Foods, Kroger, Publix, HEB, and various markets throughout the United States</td>
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<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>
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<td>Appetizers</td>
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<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>
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<td>Wonderful</td>
<td>Pistachios and Almonds</td>
<td>Paramount Farms</td>
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www.ifanca.org

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