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.

DHABIHA HALAL

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In the name of God, the Most Beneficent, Most Merciful

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Salaam Readers,

Spring is upon us and we look forward to more outdoor activities. Gardening, relaxed strolls, athletic activities, and barbeques are some of what we may be participating in. This issue features many a helpful article as we prepare for the outdoor fun!

More outdoor activities means more sunshine, which is good for Vitamin D absorption. Learn more about the need and benefits of vitamin D in “The Sunshine Vitamin”.

In “Finding Your Fit”, you will learn about combining aerobic and anaerobic exercises, as well as balance, flexibility, and strength training to produce an overall fitness regimen.

Meat is a feature of most barbeques and you will find some helpful insight into how earlier generations indulged when you read “Meat”. Whether it’s a steak, lamb chop, or chicken breast, each has its own flavor and appeal. If you like cheese on your burger, or as a side to your meal, you know that not all cheese is created equal. Check out “Rennet” for a brief history of cheese making and how rennet fits in.

With all the extra activity, we may find ourselves preparing more food than we can consume. It’s astonishing to learn Americans throw away $218 billion of food a year. That’s over $600 per person. Get some ideas on how to avoid food waste in “When Dinner Makes $218 Billion Worth of Trash.”

Spice up your meals with “Turmeric” and learn the treasure of nutrients it provides.

And as always, enjoy the new recipes in this issue.

We hope you enjoy this issue and look forward to your comments and suggestions. Also, if you have a favorite original recipe you would like to share with our readers, please send it to us. If we print it, you may be eligible to receive a gift. Please send your feedback and ideas, whether via email, Facebook, or Twitter.

Enjoy!

Sincerely,

Roger Othman  content manager
Assalamu Alaikum,

As humans, we are responsible for the well-being of our planet. That responsibility encompasses taking care of each other, taking care of the animals and plants, as well as taking care of the planet as a whole. While we face many day-to-day as well as long-term challenges including, hunger; rapid population growth; disease; and so on, we have also been given the gift of reason and the capacity to think. We can develop solutions to all our challenges.

Hunger or malnutrition continue to be a problem across the globe. As the population grows, more agricultural land is being converted to housing. As the demand for food and nutrition increases, more is expected of our food production resources. When it comes to animal protein, larger herds/flocks and quicker maturities have raised questions about growth stimulation, optimal use of resources, and greenhouse gas emissions. Science can usually answer these questions and scientists are always looking for a better way to meet our needs with new technologies and methods. As halal certifiers, we must keep up with the science and address the question of halal compatibility of these new products.

One of the technologies is being referred to as ‘clean meat’. Currently, that is meat grown in a lab or a small pilot plant. This isn’t the plant-based protein produced from vegetables or grains and formulated to taste and look like meat. This is the genuine article produced from an animal cell, but grown in the lab and produced without requiring an actual animal to be slaughtered. While it may sound good, there are cost issues that must be overcome before this becomes a viable source of meat. Currently a number of enterprises are pursuing the production of meat, poultry, and even seafood in this manner. And they have produced and consumed some of the product; but at upwards of $6,000 a pound this ‘clean meat’ is a little beyond most consumer budgets. However, this cost has come down from the initial cost of upwards of $1,000,000 a pound. So there is hope the cost can one day compete with slaughtered meat products, without the side effects associated with growing, nurturing, and slaughtering animals.

As food scientists, this is an exciting endeavor; as consumers, it may give us additional options; but as halal certifiers we must study the processes and products to determine if they meet halal requirements.

God has blessed humans with great mental faculties that can be used to develop a multitude of products to serve humanity. We need to put some of those faculties to work understanding the technology and processes and determining if they are compatible with the halal diet or not.

Sincerely,

Muhammad Munir Chaudry president

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Celebrating Halal

By Shahzmeen Hussain
The first-ever halal lifestyle event of its kind in the United States is taking place at the iconic Navy Pier in Chicago, Illinois on April 13–15, 2018. I Heart Halal™ is the premier event for Muslim American consumers looking to embrace both modernity and faith in their lives and in the products and services they buy today. Focusing on more than food, this three-day festival will showcase a broad range of halal experiences across the food, fashion, beauty, travel, health, and finance sectors.

I Heart Halal kicks off with an opening night party on Thursday night for media and VIP guests to get a sneak peek at the weekend’s activities. The action revs up Friday when attendees fill the 100,000 square foot hall, and visit the food court, Grand Bazaar, kids play area, lounge, and attend the shows on the main stage and specialty areas.

In the food court, attendees will find traditional halal restaurants as well as restaurants going “halal for the weekend.” In the Grand Bazaar they will find halal products in every category: food, fashion, beauty, health and wellness, sports and fitness, banking and finance, and travel. The main stage will feature different events including entertainment and a fashion show, while other areas will offer interactive session, including cooking demonstrations, health and fitness demonstrations, and a Beauty Masterclass.

“The Muslim consumer in North America today is like every other person,” said Asma Ahad, one of the event’s board of directors and IFANCA’s Director of Halal Market Development. “They want everything; they’re not limited to traditional ethnic cuisine.”

In particular, modern Muslim millennials are growing more conscious about their lifestyle choices, and are celebrating who they are without apology. They want to live a life that is “halal,” that is good, healthy, and wholesome, a concept not limited to Muslims.
Finding Your Fit

By Nadia Malik
If you’ve been diligently hopping on the treadmill every morning for the past couple of years to get in a 5-mile run before your day begins, you may literally and figuratively be running to nowhere. While the jog, an aerobic exercise that increases your heart rate initially and then maintains it at that level, definitely has a positive effect on your body, just it alone is likely not enough to give you a well-rounded workout.

The key difference between aerobic and anaerobic is oxygen. Aerobic exercising is about building endurance and cardiac health, which helps in maintaining physical activity for a long period of time because cells are receiving plenty of oxygen. This includes activity such as walking, biking, and swimming. “This is beneficial in day-to-day life,” according to Nazima Qureshi, a Toronto-based registered dietitian, nutritionist, and former personal trainer. “For example, if you run up the stairs, you’re not out of breath. It helps you maintain those basic functions.”

In anaerobic exercising, oxygen is depleted from the muscles, so it’s meant to be sustainable for only very short instances, such as with sprints or very heavy weight lifting. You can tell you’re doing this work when you feel that burning sensation in your muscles, which is an indication that cells are running low on oxygen.

Aerobic exercise is by no means something to shirk, and it has myriad benefits. Those who feel they have a lot of weight to lose or are medically obese could see a drastic change from this training if they’ve just started, according to Abby Mohammed, a National Academy of Sports Medicine-certified trainer. “With aerobic training, you’re really burning calories in the time you’re doing that exercise,” she explains.

Mohammed owns Veiled Fitness, an Illinois-based personal training facility that caters to women who want to work out modestly. She confirms the key is combining several types of exercise to achieve maximum advantage, because bodies become accustomed to aerobic workouts and the oxygen intake hits a plateau after a while.

Most fitness experts agree that there are four or five basic movements that make a more complete regimen. Those include aerobic and anaerobic exercises, as well as balance and flexibility. Some also add in strength training, which breaks down muscles and helps them grow stronger as they repair overnight.

“For the average person, where they’re trying to be healthier and fitter, the best thing to do is incorporate multiple types of exercises,” Qureshi explains. “A good fitness program will have all four components.”

When it comes to anaerobic work, Mohammed contends that most people can last for about 30 seconds with these maneuvers; athletes may be able to sustain them for up to 3 minutes. Anaerobic benefits include building lean muscle, protecting joints, and boosting metabolism. All forms of exercise are recommended for any age group, but balance especially becomes important as people age; it helps prevent falls and injuries. These could include balancing on one foot, a single-leg squat, or progressing to a squat on top of a Bosu ball. The key, Mohammed asserts, is to master each portion before moving on to a tougher balancing act. Without mastery at each level, there’s a greater risk of injury.

Flexibility comes in two components: static and dynamic stretching. Static is holding a move, such as in a cool down after a workout, and dynamic means pushing the body a little further with continued stretching, such as walking lunges. Both help with joint movement. “The main focus of flexibility is reducing your chance of injury and improving your range of motion,” Qureshi says. Yoga combines the tenets of flexibility and balance into one.

Mohammed also recommends foam rolling as a form of stretching and flexibility. This has the added bonus of reducing the risk of injury from workouts. The roller forces muscles to release tightness.

Much of the focus on aerobic effort alone seems to come from a fallacy that it’s the best tactic for weight loss. Qureshi and Mohammed emphasize combinations with strength training and muscle building. “When you build muscle, you burn more fat,” Qureshi continues. Both are also big proponents of interval training, where one activity is taken on at a high
level for a short burst of time and then there’s a longer “rest” period with lower activity. This is where the anaerobic is built in with the aerobic.

Weight loss is not usually a long-term sustainable goal. However if your goal is to test the limits of your body, it may be more motivating.

However, Qureshi really wants to also push away from the concept of working out for the sake of losing weight. “I want to look at fitness as a way to maintain your lifestyle,” she says. Weight loss is not usually a long-term sustainable goal. However if your goal is to test the limits of your body, it may be more motivating.

There are also practical concerns, such as keeping up with the ability to make daily prayers for the longest period of time before the physical activity is too much for someone’s body.

The good news is that these exercises are attainable for nearly any person, no matter their age or previous fitness level. “Very basic exercises can help you over time,” Qureshi says. For an older person, just practicing lifting legs while sitting in a chair can be the starting point.

Qureshi’s recommendation for a complete workout includes building a solid foundation with basic moves, such as squats and pushups. She emphasizes concentrating on proper form. She also recommends starting any weights at a low level and adding on to them gradually once a level is mastered. Qureshi cautions that before embarking on a workout regimen, one should consult a physician.

Mohammed often relies on rowing machines for her clients. She’ll start with a steady aerobic exercise on them and interval training on the same machines. Then she includes squats and planks, adds strength training, and ends with stretching. She usually has clients do anaerobic work through interval training on their own, but if she feels they’re not keeping up with them, she’ll include some intense bursts of jumping jacks and mountain climbers into the routine.

Mohammed recognizes it can be intimidating taking on new techniques, especially if you’re in a gym setting and people are around to watch your first attempts. She recommends having a plan of attack. “Even if you don’t hire a trainer, if you have a plan of action of what you’re going to do when you are there, it’s less intimidating.”

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IHeartHalal
The first-ever Halal Lifestyle Festival in America

April 13-15, 2018 ❤ Navy Pier ❤ Chicago
IHeartHalal.com/tickets
Skeletons, without them life would be a flop, literally. The 206 bones in our body are responsible for keeping us upright, protecting our organs, and producing red blood cells. With the many functions our bones carry out, keeping them healthy is especially important. A key step in keeping ones’ bones strong is making sure to get enough vitamin D, the sunshine vitamin. Not only does vitamin D keep our bones strong, it also allows calcium in the foods we eat to be absorbed by our bodies and incorporated into our bones. Additionally, vitamin D limits the release of the parathyroid hormone, which is responsible for the breakdown of bones. Though the parathyroid hormone is needed for bone remodeling, in excess it can be damaging.

According to Medical News Today article What are the health benefits of vitamin D?, in children, vitamin D deficiencies can cause Rickets, a disease often characterized by bowed legs due to bone weakness. In adults, vitamin D deficiency often manifests as either osteomalacia or osteoporosis. Osteomalacia is when bones become soft, and osteoporosis is when they become brittle. Both conditions are detrimental to overall health. Mayo Clinic explains that bone breakdown is a constant, naturally occurring process and osteoporosis happens when new bone is not created fast enough to replace the bone that is lost. According to the National Osteoporosis Foundation, nearly 80% of those affected by osteoporosis are women. Additionally, 50% of women over 50 years old break a bone due to osteoporosis. For these reasons, it is especially important for women of all ages to make sure they get enough vitamin D.

In addition to bone health, vitamin D plays a role in cell growth and cell communication, both important in cancer
prevention. Medical News Today explains that calcitriol, one of the forms of vitamin D in the body, limits the spread of cancer by preventing the growth of blood vessels in cancerous tissue. Additionally, calcitriol plays a role in preventing cancer from spreading through the body.

Vitamin D is synthesized by the body when sunlight, specifically ultraviolet-B (UVB) rays, interact with exposed skin. The more skin that is exposed, the more vitamin D is produced.

The benefits of vitamin D don’t end there. The study Benefits and Requirements of Vitamin D for Optimal Health: A Review found that vitamin D can help prevent “several bone diseases, muscle weakness, more than a dozen types of internal cancers, multiple sclerosis, and type 1 diabetes mellitus.”

The number of people with vitamin D deficiencies is hard to measure, as there is not a consensus on how much vitamin D is needed on a daily basis. As described by the Scientific American article Vitamin D Deficiency Soars in the U.S., Study Says, estimates range from 20%-75% of Americans being vitamin D deficient. This deficiency can be due to a multitude of factors including location, time, and skin color.

Vitamin D is synthesized by the body when sunlight, specifically ultraviolet-B (UVB) rays, interact with skin. The more skin that is exposed, the more vitamin D is produced. However, many factors determine whether the body is naturally able to produce enough vitamin D, including geographic location, exposure time, and skin color.

The Vitamin D Council explains that geographic location is a key factor in vitamin D production. The further one lives from the equator, the less UVB is able to penetrate the atmosphere, due to the angle of the sun. This negative effect is amplified during winter. For example, a person living in Florida is exposed to enough UVB to make vitamin D all year round while a person in Northern Canada is not exposed to enough UVB from October through April to produce sufficient vitamin D.

Time also impacts how much vitamin D your body makes. Early in the day, late in the day, and during much of the winter, the UVB rays enter the earth’s atmosphere at an angle that results in most of them being blocked.

Most foods don’t contain enough Vitamin D, but these shown here are a good source.

![Image of various vitamin D-rich foods including eggs, salmon, green peas, and mushrooms.](WWW.IFANCA.ORG)
Midday, and in the summer are when the most UVB is penetrating the atmosphere, and production of vitamin D is the most efficient.

Skin color also plays a role in vitamin D production. Melanin protects against skin damage by preventing UVB rays from entering the skin. Though this protects the skin, it also prevents vitamin D synthesis. This is why people with darker skin, and more melanin, take more time to produce sufficient vitamin D than those with lighter skin. Age, pollution, and sunscreen can also decrease the efficacy of vitamin D synthesis. These many factors make it difficult to determine just how much time in the sun a person needs to create sufficient vitamin D. However, the Vitamin D Council states that “A good rule of thumb is to get half the sun exposure it takes for your skin to begin to burn to get your vitamin D and expose as much skin as possible.”

In addition to being synthesized, vitamin D can also be consumed. However, according to the Vitamin D Council, most foods do not contain high concentrations of vitamin D, and diet alone is not an adequate supply of this important vitamin. Some of the foods that do have high levels of vitamin D include fatty fish, fish oil, eggs, milk, orange juice, and vitamin D fortified cereals.

...according to the Vitamin D Council, most foods do not contain high concentrations of vitamin D, and diet alone is not an adequate supply of this important vitamin.

Supplements are another source of vitamin D. The Vitamin D Council states the average person who works indoors 5 days a week usually needs supplements to meet the recommended minimum requirement. There are two types of vitamin D supplements: D2 and D3. The Medscape article Vitamin D: A Rapid Review explains that vitamin D3 is the same as what is found in people and fish. It also has a longer shelf life and is more potent than D2. However, D3 is synthesized from lanolin, an oil in wool, while D2 is produced from fungus and yeast. Therefore, D2 is often chosen by vegetarians and vegans. It should be noted that too much vitamin D can cause unhealthy blood calcium levels, so consulting with a doctor is always important when taking supplements. IFANCA has certified a number of vitamin D supplements.

Infants are a group for whom vitamin D supplements are especially important. This is because breast milk is low in vitamin D and it is not recommended for babies to spend much time outside. Mayo Clinic recommends that breastfed babies (fully or partially) be fed liquid vitamin D soon after birth until they are weaned, until they can drink 32 ounces of vitamin D fortified formula a day, or until they are older than 12 months and drink whole cow’s milk.

Just as the sun is key for life, the sunshine vitamin is key for our health, from infancy to adulthood.

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.
What’s Up with Turmeric?

By Maryam Funmilayo
"Then eat of what Allah has provided for you [which is] lawful and good. And be grateful for the favor of Allah, if it is [indeed] Him that you worship."

Quran 16:114

For years, the only culinary spices and food flavors that I was very familiar with were Maggi cubes, Monosodium Glutamate seasoning, and Accent. This was because these three food flavors were used in our daily meals while growing up. It wasn’t until my college years when I majored in public health nutrition at the university, that I became more enlightened about real foods, nutrition, and the impact of genetically modified food products on the public’s health. In my quest to search for healthier options, I learned about different herbs and spices. Then, I got to know about turmeric. I read more about it and decided to replace my other food flavors with turmeric. Slowly and surely, I got hooked to the herbs and spices. It didn’t take me that long to get used to them because they looked natural, earthly, and real.

Turmeric is a very bright yellow, powdery spice. Its color often reminds me of the yellow sweet potatoes that have red skin. Turmeric is made from a root plant similar to the ginger family. Its skin is coarse in nature and it tastes bitter in its powdery form. Historically, turmeric has been used for thousands of years in Asia, and just a few decades in other parts of the world.

**Turmeric in the Clinic:**

It always amazes me how rich and bountiful the nutritional components of many of our earthly plants are. Although turmeric is typically used in its dried, powdery form, fresh turmeric can also be used. Clinically, turmeric is made up of carbohydrates, water, protein, fat, dietary minerals (iron, potassium, manganese, and vitamin B6), dietary fiber, and curcumin, which is a primary antioxidant in turmeric.

**Turmeric in the Kitchen:**

Turmeric is one of the ‘must-have’ key ingredients and a widely used spice in many countries around the world, especially in African, Middle Eastern, and Asian cooking. It is also the main ingredient in curry powder, another very common spice in many households. It is used both in savory and sweet dishes. In Southern Nigeria, turmeric is dubbed the ‘yellow ginger’; its use in cooking jollof rice has become very popular. In India, the leaf plan of turmeric is used to prepare a sweet dish known as Patoleo. In Thailand,
fresh turmeric roots known as turmeric rhizomes are widely used in their turmeric soup and yellow curry dishes. In Saudi Arabia, their chicken kabsa is highly marinated with turmeric and other spices. In Morocco, turmeric is a main component of their spice mix ‘Ras el Hanout’ which plays a similar role as ‘Garam masala’ does in Indian cuisine. In Japan, turmeric is used to make a hot drink known as “golden milk”. One advantage of using fresh turmeric for consumption over powdered turmeric is that fresh turmeric is less bitter. Hence, it can be cut into small pieces, grated, or thinly sliced, and eaten raw by itself. It can also be added to salads or other fresh dishes for a colorful edible garnish.

In addition to its use as a culinary spice, it is also used as a coloring agent, herbal remedy, and beauty treatment. Some food items we find in supermarkets and grocery stores have food coloring agents such as turmeric, added to them. Turmeric seems to be a strong food coloring because of its golden yellow color which tends to give a permanent stain sometimes. These food items include ice cream, orange juice, yellow cakes, popcorn, sauces, and many baked products.

When it comes to herbal remedies, turmeric seems to be one of the top choices for natural medicinal use in most South Asian homes. It is widely known for its anti-inflammatory, antiseptic, and anti-oxidant properties and it is used in healing cuts, burns, stings, and bites, according to http://prophetic-medicine.blogspot.com/search/label/turmeric. When it comes to beauty treatments many South Asian women use turmeric in their daily skincare. They believe the strong golden yellow color of turmeric and its natural chemical properties, do clear up some skin blemishes and hyperpigmentation, thus brightening up the skin.

Personally, I use turmeric mainly for my cooking alongside other spices and herbs. I use it to marinade raw beef, chicken, and fish. I also use it for my stir-fry mixed veggies to give it a distinct coloring. Instead of having the usual salt and pepper staples on the dining table, I have swapped the salt for turmeric. Just a quick dash of turmeric instead of salt, is healthier and more beneficial. I sometimes use turmeric for my homemade concoction whenever I am down with a chesty cough during the winter season. I add a small teaspoon of turmeric to a cup of hot water mixed with honey, fresh lemon juice, and grated ginger.

As Islam has advised us on eating good and clean food, it also encourages eating in moderation. Hence, it is always good to caution how much turmeric we use in our foods so that we do not overuse it. In addition, balance and variety are two other factors that nutritionists advise their patients to focus on when it comes to food consumption. Thus, balancing the use of turmeric by using a variety of other spices and herbs is a good idea.

As always, read the food labels and ingredients on a food item carefully. If you have any doubts about a product, contact the manufacturer.

MARYAM FUNMILAYO is a certified food literacy educator and community health professional based in Irving, Texas. She holds a Master of Arts degree in Health Education and Promotion, and a Bachelor of Science degree in Human Nutrition. She is the CEO and co-founder of Scholarship Plaza.
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MEAT

By Kelly Crosby
There is an often used expression of “getting to the meat of the matter.” The phrase is used when someone wants to point out the most important or fundamental essence of an issue at hand. Such an expression compares itself to the importance of meat in the literal sense as the most important and basic part of any given meal. So, what is meat? The answer seems obvious. However, depending on cultural norms, religion, and dietary restrictions, some types of animal flesh are considered meat, and some aren’t.

Choosing lean red meats are better for your health, as they have less saturated fat. Some examples of lean red meats are sirloin tip steaks and lamb loin chops. Choose prime lean cuts of meat with the word “loin” in the name.

According to Exploratorium.edu, “Meat is mostly the muscle tissue of an animal. Most animal muscle is roughly 75% water, 20% protein; and 5% fat, carbohydrates, and assorted proteins.” Meat can be broadly classified as red or white meat. Red meat is the flesh of mammals, such as cows, sheep, and goats. White meat is usually referred to as poultry, such as chicken or turkey. Although seafood is animal flesh, some people do not classify it as meat. There are many reasons for this. In some religions, meat is something that only comes from animals that live on land: sheep, cows, goats, and chickens. Some nutritionists consider meat something that is only derived from mammals or animals that produce milk and have muscle tissue. In this article, we focus on the advantages of red meat, white meat, and seafood.

In gastronomy, better known as culinary arts or cooking, red meat is basically any meat that is red when raw and becomes a dark color when cooked. In nutritional science, red meat is any meat that has more myoglobin than white meat. Myoglobin is an iron and oxygen binding protein found in the muscle tissue of most mammals. Myoglobin also contains hemes, the red pigments responsible for the color of red meat. Red meats like beef or lamb are high in iron. Iron is especially important for teenage girls and women in their child bearing years. According to Webmd. com, “Red meat also supplies vitamin B12, which helps make DNA and keeps nerve and red blood cells healthy, and zinc, which keeps the immune system working properly.” It also provides protein, a building block of muscle and bone.

Choosing lean red meats are better for your health, as they have less saturated fat. Some examples of lean red meats are sirloin tip steaks and lamb loin chops. Choose prime lean cuts of meat with the word “loin” in the name. The American Institute for Cancer Research, a nonprofit that focuses on cancer prevention through diet and physical activity, advises consuming no more than 18 ounces of cooked red meat a week. The group recommends avoiding all processed meats, such as sausage and deli meats, citing research that shows an increased risk of colon cancer.

White meat is any meat that is pale before and after cooking. Chicken and turkey are popular white meats, although the thighs and legs are considered “dark meat.” In nutritional studies, white meat excludes all mammal flesh. In general, white meats have less cholesterol and saturated fat than red meats. White meat is a leaner source of protein than red meat and contains less saturated fat. The U.S. Department of Agriculture states that “boneless and skinless white meat contains slightly less calories when compared to a boneless skinless dark meat.” However, white meat has less iron and protein than red meat.

Seafood is another source of nutrition rich in protein, vitamins, and minerals. Seafood is also low in fat and cholesterol. It is an excellent source of many important minerals, including iodine, zinc, potassium, phosphorus, and B complex vitamins. In the fatty skin of salmon and tuna lies a major source of vitamin D, which promotes healthy bone growth, calcium absorption, and boosts immune system efficiency. But the greatest benefit of eating seafood is that it is an abundant source of omega-3 fatty acids. Omega-3 fatty acids have been proven beneficial for heart health and for reducing the risk of stroke and heart attack. The American Heart Association recommends eating fish, particularly fatty fish like salmon, lake trout, sardines, and albacore tuna at least two times a week. Conversely, some fish, such as king mackerel, swordfish, or canned tuna are consistently high in mercury. Mercury can harm the nervous system of a fetus or young child. Consumer Reports recommends, “women who are pregnant, nursing, or may become pregnant, as well as young children, should take special precautions” and avoid mercury dense seafood.

White meat is a leaner source of protein than red meat and contains less saturated fat... However, white meat has less iron and protein than red meat.
Islam is a religion that promotes balance and moderation. Regarding meat consumption, this advice is especially crucial. While meat consumption has many advantages for our health, the overconsumption of meat can be harmful.

For Muslims, our diet can include meat from a variety of different animals. Most meats are permissible for consumption except for a few. God says in the Quran, “And We will provide them with fruit and meat from whatever they desire.” [Quran 52:22]. Islam is a religion that promotes balance and moderation. Regarding meat consumption, this advice is especially crucial. While meat consumption has many advantages for our health, the overconsumption of meat can be harmful. According to the John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, “A strong body of scientific evidence links excess meat consumption, particularly of red and processed meat, with heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, obesity, certain cancers, and earlier death.”

There are hadith about the Prophet, peace be upon him, enjoying meat, on occasion, and that he preferred mutton shoulder. Of course, back then, meat was almost a luxury, eaten only occasionally by most Muslims. Today we often feel unfulfilled if we don’t have some meat every day. So though eating meat is an easy and tasty way to add protein and essential nutrients to your diet; make sure to consume moderate portion sizes of lean meats along with healthy helpings of vegetables in order to enjoy a yummy and balanced diet.

Kelly Crosby is an artist and a freelance writer in Atlanta, Georgia.
Focaccia Pizza
By: Imran Ikram

Servings: 4

INGREDIENTS

2½+⅛ teaspoons active dry yeast
3 cups white flour
1 cup lukewarm water
1 tablespoon nonfat dry milk powder (optional)
1½ teaspoons salt
4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, plus more for oiling pans
Toppings as desired such as shredded halal Cabot Cheddar cheese, tomato sauce, basil, etc.

DIRECTIONS

1. Create a starter by combining ½ cup lukewarm water, 1 cup flour, and ⅛ teaspoon yeast. Thoroughly mix to get a wet paste. Let sit in a large, covered container for 12–24 hours. The starter will expand and be very bubbly and sticky when you open the container after the time has passed.

2. Add the starter to the remaining yeast, flour, water, dry milk powder, salt, and olive oil and knead. A stand mixer is best for about 6 minutes, but you can do this by hand. You should get a smooth, velvety dough. Liberally oil two 9-in cast iron or aluminum pans with olive oil.

3. Divide the dough in half and press out into the pans until they touch the edge. You should not need to roll them out. If they do not reach the edge you can wait for them to expand. Let rest covered with plastic wrap at room temperature for 2–4 hours.

4. Preheat oven to 475°F and cut a 9-in round out of foil.

5. Baste the outer edge of the dough with olive oil and top the pizza with your favorite toppings, but do not overcrowd. Place the foil round on top to reduce excessive browning, removing in the last 5 minutes of cooking. Bake for 20–28 minutes until the dough is cooked through and the cheese is melted.
Lentil Soup “Shorabat Addas”
By: Alia Shalabi

Servings: 8

INGREDIENTS

2 cups red lentils
9–10 cups water
1 teaspoon cumin
½ teaspoon turmeric
1 tablespoon salt
½ teaspoon pepper
1 large onion, diced
2 tablespoons olive oil
Juice of one lemon

DIRECTIONS

1. Rinse lentils well. Add to a large pot with the water. Bring to a boil, then cover pot and reduce heat slightly. Cook for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally, or until lentils are tender.

2. While the lentils are cooking, heat a sauté pan over medium heat. Once hot, add olive oil. Sauté the onions until golden brown.

3. When the lentils are tender, add cumin, turmeric, salt, pepper, and sautéed onions.

4. Simmer for 5–10 minutes. Turn off heat and stir in lemon juice.

5. Serve with lemon wedges. Enjoy! 😊
MoiMoi: A Nigerian Delicacy
By: Maryam Funmilayo

Servings: 8-10

INGREDIENTS

- 4 cups red lentils (black-eyed beans can also be used)
- 2 large red bell peppers
- 2 large onions
- 2 cups water
- 1 cup cooked shrimps
- 1 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tablespoons of turmeric powder
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 teaspoon of cayenne pepper
- 1 teaspoon cumin seeds
- 1 teaspoon thyme
- 1 teaspoon cilantro
- 1 teaspoon rosemary
- 1 teaspoon basil leaves
- 1 teaspoon oregano leaves
- 1 teaspoon black seeds

DIRECTIONS

1. Rinse the first three ingredients separately.
2. Pour the 2 cups of water in a blender and add the lentils, red bell peppers, and onions.
3. Blend very well until there is a smooth consistency.
4. Pour the blended mixture very well in a big bowl.
5. Pour in the cooked shrimps, olive oil, salt, and the rest of the ingredients into the bowl.
6. Mix very well and pour into a large Pyrex dish.
7. Bake for 60 minutes at 325°F.
8. Serve with rice, plantains, or corn pap.
Panko Breaded Chicken
By: Imran Ikram

Servings: 4

INGREDIENTS

1 pound boneless halal chicken thighs, cut into 1-inch strips, pat dry
2 teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon garlic powder
1 teaspoon onion powder
1 teaspoon smoked paprika
½ teaspoon chili powder (optional)
1 cup flour
2 eggs
2 cups panko bread crumbs

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 425°F.
2. Combine the seasonings in a small bowl and liberally season both sides of the chicken.
3. In three separate, large bowls, lay out the flour, egg, and panko from left to right.
4. Dredge the chicken pieces in flour, thoroughly coat in egg, and coat with the panko. Set aside.
5. Grease a cooling rack with cooking spray and place over a baking tray. This is optional, but it allows circulation and prevents sogginess. Place the coated chicken on the rack. If you do not have a rack, just place directly on a pan and flip once during cooking.
6. Bake for 20-30 minutes, or until the chicken is cooked through.
Presented in slices on elegant appetizer platters, or baked into casual delights like pizza and spinach-feta pie, cheese compliments nearly every cuisine. This delicious and versatile treat inspires smiles and pleases palates around the world.

The winds of time have obscured cheese’s true origins, but legends say that a Middle Eastern merchant accidentally created cheese while transporting fresh milk in a lamb stomach pouch under the hot sun. The sack naturally contained rennet (enzymes which allow young mammals to digest milk), so the warmed milk separated into delicious curds and whey.

Bronze Age people discovered cheese over 6000 years ago, sometime after the domestication of goats and sheep. Remnants of ancient cheese production have been found in Sumeria, Egypt, and Switzerland (ilovecheese.co.uk). Interestingly, the oldest cheese yet discovered emerged from an area where most people are lactose-intolerant: Xinjiang, China, according to the Journal of Archaeological Science. This enterprising community produced highly digestible kefir cheese 3800 years ago without rennet by using kefir grains, a symbiotic culture of lactic bacteria and yeast which ferments milk into a liquid, smoothie-like drink. Like yogurt, kefir retains the nutritional advantages of milk but also provides high levels of probiotics, which WebMD describes as “live bacteria and yeasts that are good for your health, especially your digestive system.” Today, Mediterranean cheesemakers drain salted kefir in cheesecloth to make Labne, a soft cheese packed with healthy probiotics.

Over the millennia, cheese making basics have stayed relatively constant. A cheesemaker begins by gathering a relatively large quantity of fresh milk (ten pounds of milk = 1 pound of cheese), then they add a coagulant (rennet or enzymes) and a starter culture of healthy bacteria.

Cheese can be created without a starter culture, but this good bacteria helps purify the milk while giving various cheeses their unique taste and texture. Culturesforlife.com explains that “cheese cultures rapidly raise the acidity of milk by consuming the lactose (milk sugar) present and converting it into lactic acid. This disables the already-present bacteria and helps the rennet (or coagulant being used) to set the cheese.

After the curd forms, the cheesemaker presses the cheese into shape, then often lets it cure or age. Soft mild cheeses, such as cream cheese or fresh mozzarella are ready to eat without aging. Hard flavorful cheeses, such as cheddar, Gouda, or Parmesan, must be aged to develop their full flavors.

**Sources of Rennet**

- Animal (rennin from the stomach of a lamb, goat kid, or calf)
- Vegetable (enzymes from a plant)
- Microbial (enzymes from a fungus)
- Genetically-modified (enzymes from bioengineered bacteria)
Rennet: A Hidden Ingredient

Traditionally, most cheesemakers prepared rennet from the stomach lining of a milk-fed lamb, goat kid, or calf. Even today, the majority of European cheesemakers continue to rely on animal rennet. The majority of cheeses produced in the United States today use non-animal derived rennet such as vegetable rennet (extracted from plants), microbial rennet (derived from fermented fungus), or bioengineered rennet (chymosin). According to Scientific American, 80-90% of all cheese in the United States is now made with bioengineered rennet. In fact, in 1991 chymosin became the first enzyme made with recombinant DNA to be approved for food use. (It was also one of the first items certified halal by IFANCA.)

Not all cheese requires the use of rennet or chymosin. Traditional South Asian cuisines gently curdle the milk with lemon juice to produce a tender solid cheese called paneer. Italian cooks also mix lemon juice with milk, but add salt and heat to create ricotta, a soft spreadable delicacy that’s eaten fresh or baked into lasagna and desserts. Other modern choices include vegan cheeses made with soy or nut “milk” and thickened with nuts, yeast, or agar agar.

Shopping for Sources

Unless you make the cheese yourself, it is difficult to determine how a particular cheese was produced. The FDA requires cheese labels to list rennet as an ingredient, but doesn’t require disclosure of the enzyme’s specific source. This means that enzymes made from animals, plants, or microbes may all be listed as simply “enzymes.” Other cheese labels fail to list enzymes as ingredients, or lack ingredient lists altogether. For example, grocers sometimes rewrap imported cheeses for sale by the piece, and only provide the cheese name and price.

Fortunately some cheesemakers provide clear information about enzyme ingredient origins on their websites. The Organic Valley cooperative produces a wide variety of cheeses using only plant-based microbial enzymes, as do the cheese-making plants owned by Cabot Creamery. Canadian cheesemaker Mariposa Dairy specializes in artisan goat and sheep cheeses, proudly using animal-free rennet that’s free from synthetic Recombinant Bovine Growth Hormone (rBGH) and gluten.

Look for the Label

These companies also go the extra step to simplify our grocery store choices by clearly displaying the halal certification symbol on halal product labels. Organic Valley offers halal-certified Cottage Cheese and Cream Cheese bars and tubs. Many Cabot products, including a variety of Greek yogurts, and Cheddars, Pepper Jack, and Munster cheeses also clearly display the halal certification symbol. Mariposa’s halal-certified cheeses include Goat Feta, and a variety of Chèvre goat milk cheeses, such as plain, fig, honey, and black pepper. Many of these products are widely available in local stores, national grocery chains, and online.

Of course, it is best to check individual labels for halal certification even if the brand includes halal-certified cheeses. Or take a cue from the past and experiment with making your own cheese at home using kefir grains, lemon juice, or vegetarian enzymes. No matter how you slice it, it’s sure to be delicious and nutritious!

LINDA GARDNER PHILLIPS is a writer and creative director living at the Deerpath Farm Conservation Community in Lake County, Illinois. Her specialties include food, healthy living, and transformative design thinking. She can be reached at lgardnerphillips@gmail.com.

HALAL CHEESE SOURCES

- https://www.cabotcheese.coop
- http://organicvalley.coop
- https://mariposadairy.ca
IHeartHalal
The first-ever Halal Lifestyle Festival in America

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When Dinner Makes $218 Billion Worth of Trash

By Naazish YarKhan
Guess what’s the number one item in America’s landfills? We may think it’s diapers, plastics, or electronics but the answer is, unfortunately, food.

As a nation, 40 percent of our food ends up in the trash, according to SavetheFood.com. A family of four wastes as much as $1500 worth of food yearly. What if you found $1500 hidden in your sock drawer? Still think it’s not worth saving? From a purely economic point of view, that’s money in the trash. From an Islamic point of view, it’s disrespecting a blessing we are answerable for to God. In a nation where 1 out of 6 kids worry about not having their next meal, food waste is especially unacceptable.

Food waste is a multi-billion dollar problem internationally and waste occurs from farm to fork; whether in “fields, warehouses, packaging, distribution, supermarkets, restaurants, or fridges,” according to the Guardian. In the U.S. that’s $218 billion worth of food wasted, 70 billion pounds of it each year to be exact, according to the 2016, U.S.-based ReFED report.

If you’re an avid Halal Consumer magazine reader, when it comes to food waste you know we’re advocates of reinventing leftovers, composting, smaller portions so you can finish what’s on your plate and, of course, recognizing the barakah that is food. But that’s only the beginning.

#LoveTheUgly

Supermarkets don’t stock “ugly” produce that doesn’t have the “right” shape, size, or color because consumers don’t buy it. Our demand for blemish free, cosmetically perfect food results in farmers throwing away or feeding cattle 20 to 40 percent of perfectly nutritious, delicious, unspoiled produce that looks slightly different, when 1 in 6 American kids don’t know where their next meal is coming from.

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Our demand for blemish free, cosmetically perfect food results in farmers throwing away or feeding cattle 20 to 40 percent of perfectly nutritious, delicious, unspoiled produce that looks slightly different...
We can begin the revolution by changing how we buy produce. “I didn’t know this food was thrown away. I hate the idea of food wastage, especially having seen poverty in developing nations. The idea of throwing away food because of how it looks is just unacceptable to me. While I wouldn’t go out of my way to find the ugliest produce on the shelf, if it’s going to be thrown away, I’ll buy it in a heartbeat,” says Farah Adil, a Chicago downtown resident.

Adil is an ideal candidate for ImperfectFood.com. “Imperfect delivers produce to your door for 30-50% less than the grocery store. We do this by sourcing “ugly” fruits and vegetables that usually go to waste on farms. These fruits and veggies taste the exact same on the inside but look a little “wonky” on the outside. Customers can select the box size and frequency that suits their lifestyle. Customers also choose which fruits and vegetables they’d like in their box each week from an ever-changing list of delicious, seasonal produce—so there’s no receiving produce you don’t want!,” reads their website.

Imperfectfood.com delivers ugly produce to the entire Bay Area in California; Los Angeles, CA; Orange County, CA; Portland, OR Metro Area; Seattle, WA Metro Area (includes Tacoma); and Chicago, IL Metro Area.

Adults and kids alike can also lend their pitchforks to The Ugly Fruit and Veg Campaign (www.endfoodwaste.org and www.KidsLoveUglyFruit.com), internationally.

Go Gleaning

“Gleaning is picking what’s left in farmers’ fields after the harvest and delivering it to food banks (like Harvesters), pantries, shelters, and community kitchens. Farmers often have produce leftover that they can’t sell and don’t wish to throw away or turn under, so instead of letting it go to waste, they donate it,” according to After the Harvest. Google “Food Recovery Efforts” and “Gleaning” for your next service project and ensure food reaches hungry people.

Donate, Don’t Waste

Cooked food cannot be donated to a food pantry but it can go to soup kitchens and the like. Check out The Food Rescue Locator, (sustainableamerica.org/foodrescue), “an online directory of organizations across the United States that rescue, glean, transport, prepare, and distribute food to the needy in their communities.”

Buy Wisely

Do you really need to buy fresh produce that you may not get around to cooking before it spoils? Is there a frozen alternative for it? What many of us don’t know is that frozen veggies and fruits are flash frozen and trap the nutrients in the produce soon after harvest. When fresh produce travels, it loses nutrients with each day on the road. With frozen produce, unless it’s local produce, you are getting more nutritious food. When was the last time you had a party and didn’t have food in your fridge for days and, no, it wasn’t Thanksgiving or Eid. Use the food calculator (the guest-imator) on SavetheFood.com to determine how much food you realistically need to shop for a dinner party or a family of your size. Cha-ching! That’s the sound of money saved (and food kept out of a landfill).

Shop Less

According to Hester Bury, Director of Corporate and Foundation Giving, at Northern Illinois Food Bank, 2000 children receive backpacks of food each Friday, so they have food for the weekend. Can we be a nation that spends money on food we may not get around to eating before it spoils when entire families don’t have food on a regular basis? Can we have that weighing on our conscience?
Our efforts to waste less start with buying less. “ICNA Relief ran the #NoMoreCupcakes campaign nationally in January 2018,” says Dr. Saima Azfar, Director, ICNA Relief, Chicago. “The idea was to give up one item of food you ate consistently, whether it was your daily cup of coffee or your tuna sandwich, and donate the savings to charity including your local food pantries.”

Every dollar donated to a food pantry like Sabeel Pantry, ICNA Relief’s, or the Northern Illinois Food Bank, typically buys $8 worth of food, because they’re able to negotiate bulk pricing.

Start with What’s in Your Fridge

Reinvent scraps and stale food. Convert overripe, spoiling bananas into banana bread and sour milk into cottage cheese. Stale bread makes amazing French Toast Casserole and Bread Pudding. Make smoothies, jams, and jellies with bruised, old fruit. Bones make excellent stock that can be frozen and used instead of water in another recipe. Scraps like cilantro stems can go into chutneys, just as easily as the leaves. Afraid fresh tomatoes will spoil before you use them? Just freeze them. When onions turn soft and sprout, cook the protein-rich sprouts and toss the onion into your compost bin. Google it and you’ll find plenty of ways to keep many an over-ripe fruit and veggie out of landfills.

Keep Your Food Longer

The Northern Illinois Food Bank has relationships with companies that donate their expired canned food, cereals and more to them. Depending on the foods, they are edible even a year after the expiration date, says Bury. Yes! According to savethefood.com, those sell-by, Best-by, “food expiration dates have nothing to do with safety, and are only loosely related to quality... According to one industry study, 90 percent of us throw away food too soon, and over half of us do it regularly... Even meat that looks a little faded or gray is okay to eat.” So keep your food longer. If the thought is unpalatable (pun unintended), donate it to a food pantry. Given that as many as 30 percent of Illinois residents have some college education and are still forced to rely on food pantries, it is much needed.

NAAZISH YARKHAN is (www.writersstudio.us) is a writer, editor and a college essay coach and has contributed to NPR, PRI and more.

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.
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

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<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>Wonderful</td>
<td>Pistachios and Almonds</td>
<td>Paramount Farms</td>
<td>Supermarkets and drugstores throughout the United States</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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.

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