Explore
SPICY HAUTE DINING  P12
**J&M®** halal certified meals use only wholesome ingredients and have NO MSG, NO SOY, and NO ARTIFICIAL FLAVORS OR COLORS. Six varieties are gluten-free. Each meal is fully cooked and is conveniently packaged in either 10 oz. (283 g) microwaveable serving dishes or 8 oz. (227 g) travel and camping pouches. Reheat to eat in minutes.

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

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

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

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

**CHEESE TORTELLINI:** Cheese-filled tortellini in a well-seasoned tomato sauce with the added protein of pinto beans. Excellent texture and flavor!

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

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

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

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

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

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

Halal certification is by the Islamic Food & Nutrition Council of America (IFANCA)

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Tel: 847-948-1290 • Fax: 847-948-0468 • e-mail: halalcertified@sbcglobal.net
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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.

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Editor’s Note

Assalamu Alaikum

Winter, for me, is the huddle before the game. It is a time for research and reflection so that we can set goals and make plans to achieve them in the New Year. Focusing on health and fitness is invariably on most people’s to-do list. We’ll put you on the right track with The Fit Muslim – Come Rain or Snow, Whey to Go — The Best Kept Health (& Weight Management) Secret and Does it Have to be Organic?

IFANCA has its 15th International Halal Food Conference in Chicago from April 11 to 13, 2013 and it’s open to all interested stakeholders. Do consider attending if you are thinking of new business ventures. Come prepared with insights from Halal For Entrepreneurs — Your Key to New Markets. Already have a product line and it’s not meat related? The halal industry has room for you, too. Learn about The Case for Halal Certification if There Is No Meat in a Product.

As food industry insiders, we strive to keep readers posted as to the latest developments and warn of Food Fraud on US Dining Tables. Further, you may have noticed that meat, milk and egg prices are rising. When the Price Is Not Always Right explains why and what you can do about it besides finding reprieve in Comfort Foods Across Cultures. If you’re caring for a senior citizen, or are one yourself, The Dietitian is in (With) a Prescription to Aging Gracefully.

And yes, it’s also football season and party time. For that we have the perfect recommendation — Spicy Haute Dining and Fordson: Faith, Football and the American Dream.

On that note, here’s wishing you all the best for the New Year.

Sincerely,

Naazish Yarkhan

managing editor
Aasalamu Alaikum

IFANCA is preparing for its 15th International Halal Food Conference to be held in Chicago from April 11 to 13, 2013. Normally an opportunity exclusive to IFANCA’s clients, this year’s conference will be open to all those interested in halal including companies, independent entrepreneurs and all other stakeholders.

It will give you the chance to learn and network with decision makers representing industries such as ingredients, packaged foods, food service products, personal care products, packaging materials and pharmaceuticals. In past years, we have had speakers from other countries and US government agencies such as the FDA and USDA attend, as well. Buyers, sellers and suppliers are most welcome, too.

IFANCA certifies thousands of companies and tens of thousands of products. In this issue we present a sample directory featuring some of our clients who make consumer products such as Abbott Nutrition®, Nutrilite® and Olympia Food Industries®. A complete list of our clients and halal certified products is at www.ifanca.org. For B2B needs, in 2013, we intend to have micro-websites specific to different markets and regions, featuring our halal certified products.

2013 is going to be an exciting year and we look forward to you joining our efforts to make halal a household name in North America.

Wishing you a Happy New Year.

Sincerely,

Muhammad Munir Chaudry president, IFANCA
When the Price Is Not Always Right

By Aysha Hussain

Many of us have come to dread the thought of making a trip to the grocery store only to be sucker punched by the sticker price. This summer, the average cost of a gallon of milk and a pound of ground beef was approximately $3.50 each, whereas chicken was $1.50 per pound according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index. So far consumers have seen an increase in food costs by three to five percent. According to Brian Buhr, Professor and Head of Applied Economics and Agricultural Education at the University of Minnesota, the summer of 2012 and its vicious combination of intense heat, dryer than normal temperatures and little rainfall has put farmers and consumers in a quandary. Officially declared worse than the 1950s drought and labeled “The Great Drought of 2012,” more than half the country was impacted, especially key farming states like Iowa, Nebraska, Missouri, Illinois and Kansas. Making matters worse, winter 2011 through early 2012 saw the lowest snowfall on record across the USA. When there is no snow or rain, says Buhr, there is not enough water or moisture supply in our underground reserves for crop production. With the fall and winter seasons upon us, some economists estimate these high prices will snowball through 2013.

A RIPPLE EFFECT

With key animal and chicken feed ingredients such as corn and soybean production down by roughly 10 to 15 percent, hoards of farmers had little food for their livestock. The high price of feed left them with no choice but to sell their animals. Retailers, in turn, offset food supply shortages by raising prices and consumers felt the pinch in no time. “Corn (a key ingredient in animal feed) is indisputably the single largest crop in the United States. So once you reduce that, you start to increase the prices across the board. It’s simply a supply issue,” Buhr reveals. “From a consumer standpoint people are going to be paying more for eggs, milk, meat and we’ll start to see some of that on the cereal side but not as much.”

Yes, ironically, your favorite cereals and breads are not expected to cost significantly more, despite the crop shortage. Even if manufacturers were to double the price of oats used to make one box of Cheerios®, the grain is not nearly as costly as the packaging, advertising and shipping costs of cereal. The same is true whether your favorite cereal is wheat or bran based. (Check out Aysha Husain’s video online at www.youtube.com/IFANCA4halal to learn why).
MANAGING THE INCREASING COST OF FOOD

“I am lucky and don’t have to spend a ton of money on groceries because of food allowances at work,” says Humaa Bhatti of Cleveland, OH. “One thing I can think of is buying generic store brands so you have more to spend on quality, healthy foods.”

“My family usually buys in bulk so it lasts longer,” says Amanda Wagner from Brooklyn, NY.

Rabia Asghar of Rochester Hills, MI says her mother buys fruits and veggies that are in season.

True, buying food on sale, in season and in bulk are always sure-fire ways to cut grocery costs says Linda Watson, author of *Wildly Affordable Organic: Eat Fabulous Food, Get Healthy, and Save the Planet—all on $5 a Day or Less*. Watson, an adamant supporter of eating and cooking organic, healthy foods, says smart food choices can save your budget.

This could also be the time to buy into Community Supported Agriculture (CSA). If possible, buy a share in a community-supported organic farm and receive a week supply of produce from spring until fall. Visit www.sare.org for a list of community-supported farms. As Agripreneur, Dr. Hisham Moharram, owner of Good Tree Farm (www.goodtreefarm.com), a CSA, points out, “(Joining) a CSA is part of a greater effort to connect as a family and live a more wholesome life. The time spent getting, preparing and consuming food together will help us know and support each other better. Buying food

Author Linda Watson’s Check List:

1. STOCK YOUR FREEZER
Ranked high on Watson’s list is stocking up on as many affordable, fresh fruits and veggies that you can get your hands on and freezing them to last you through the winter. “One of the great things you can do is feeding your freezer. Think about your freezer as something you put produce into during the summer. You can save a tremendous amount of money.”

2. BUY MORE SEASONAL FRUITS AND VEGETABLES
Strawberries, blueberries, peaches and squash are all considered summer produce whereas oranges, dates and Brussel sprouts are great winter options. “If you have access to farmers markets (www.ams.usda.gov/farmersmarkets and www.localharvest.org), often you will get the best local prices.”

3. CUT BACK ON MEAT
According to Luke Chandler, global head of agricultural commodity markets at Rabobank, a financial institution, in an interview with *Food Business News*, “purchasers will switch consumption from animal protein back to staple grains like rice and wheat” which today are “30% cheaper than their peak 2008 prices.”

If you’re going to buy meat, Watson recommends buying chicken instead of beef because it’s more affordable and takes less energy to produce. “It takes 10 units of plant energy to create one unit of beef energy. The drought is making [beef] prices go up.”
from a farm typically means putting some time into preparing it. It is, after all, typically raw and unprocessed, uncooked food. If someone joins a CSA and does not have time to prepare/cook the food, then they are not going to have a good experience and will feel they wasted their money.” You may want to ask what veggies and fruits the CSA offers or be adventurous and willing to try new foods.

WILL THE WEATHER COOPERATE?
Market research shows the price of meat has been swiftly increasing and will continue to rise through next year, Buhr confirms. It’s hoped that Tropical Storm Isaac might bring some relief to drought-stricken states. However, Buhr believes too much moisture from rainfall can also hurt crops more than help them. “Who knows what happens tomorrow,” says Buhr. “I can’t predict the weather, but I do know that our soil moisture conditions across the crop growing region are worse than they’ve been. If we don’t get some pretty substantial moisture coming in before next year’s crop, we are in trouble next year too.”

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Aysha Hussain is a New York-based writer and producer. She has worked at NBC, CBS and has written for newspapers and magazines such as Newsday, DiversityInc and Muslim Girl Magazine.

4. CUT BACK ON PROCESSED FOODS
The one advantage to buying processed foods like cereal is that there are always coupons available, but “if you don’t buy processed food, you’re saving so much money. Simply, the more pure you can eat, the better.” But buy only as much as you will reasonably use. The longer fresh produce sits, the more nutrients it loses.

5. CHOOSE STURDY FOODS
Foods like cabbage, carrots, onions and butternut squash all hold up well. These “sturdy” foods cost less, transport well and don’t spoil very quickly.

6. SCRIMP VS. SPLURGE
Develop a “scrimp vs. splurge list.” You’re standing in the condiment aisle and contemplating whether to buy olive oil or balsamic vinegar. Sure you’re on a budget, but don’t overdo it and know that it’s okay to make certain exceptions on food purchases. ☺
Ten years ago, organic products were limited to certain stores, brands, and quantities. But that was then. According to the Organic Trade Association’s 2011 Survey, U.S. sales of organic food and beverages have grown from $6.1 billion in 2000 to $26.7 billion in 2010. In fact, organic food outpaced the growth of total food sales. Organic non-food sales rose from $439 million in 2003 to $1.9 billion in 2010.

So what exactly is organic? For Aiman Awad from Abu Dhabi, organic products “have very little to no synthetic materials used in their production.” For Christine Thompson, from Peoria, IL, organic also denotes the “total lack of harmful chemicals not only on the harvested crop, but also within a certain radius of the designated organic crop.”

According to Mayo Health Clinic, Director of Clinical Dietetics, Jennifer K. Nelson, perhaps the most significant difference is conventional farmers’ use of antibiotics and growth hormones to produce a product quickly, and medications injected into the animals. Organic farmers, on the other hand, provide animals with organic feed and allow ample access to the outdoors for exercise and rotational grazing.

For Thompson, this outdoor time is crucial. “When a producer confines animals such as chickens to a tiny cage for life, (they are) not humanely treated nor allowed to live naturally as free range chickens. This, to me, affects the meat, giving the consumer something full of chemicals and hormones that can wreak havoc on our bodies through cancer, obesity, and other adverse effects.”

Organic Valley’s Public Affairs Manager, Jamie Lamonde agrees that “today’s globalized food system is broken with rampant use of toxic chemicals, genetically modified organisms and an unbalanced reliance on a handful of crops.” As a cooperative owned by family farmers, all of Organic Valley’s dairy, juice, eggs, meat, soy, and produce meet or exceed the requirements of the USDA Organic seal. “Organic is our hope for a sustainable
food and farming future because it improves soil, protects water, produces foods with higher nutritional value, focuses on humane animal care, and provides a fair return to the farmers,” says Lamonde.

ORGANIC — IS IT THE ONLY PATH?
An IFANCA halal-certified brand, Saffron Road, produced by American Halal Company, although not certified as organic, uses livestock and poultry that are 100% sustainably farmed, vegetarian fed and harvested on family-owned farms. Their ready-to-eat frozen dinners and simmer sauces are also certified as halal, humanely raised and antibiotic and hormone free.

According to Founder Adnan Durrani, “the key is not necessarily to obtain an organic USDA rubber stamp, especially since smaller family owned farms can’t afford the cost to get official USDA Organic certification—yet some of these farms follow better sustainable practices than some organic certified operators.” What’s essential, he says, is to understand the difference between mainstream organic factory farming that involve mass quantity, versus sustainable farming that prioritizes quality, mindful hand-slaughtering, and humane animal welfare.

“A lot of the food media think that this year is finally the time when halal goes mainstream. Simply put, halal certification guarantees the humane treatment of animals and respect for the land where our foods are grown.” — Supermarket Guru, Phil Lempert

In February 2012, Saffron Road’s new Chicken Tikka Masala was declared a “hit” by Supermarket Guru Phil Lempert (www.SuperMarketGuru.com) on his popular “New Products Hits & Misses” video review show. Lempert, one of America’s leading consumer trend-watchers and analysts, gave the entrée a score of 92 out of 100. Here’s what he had to say: “This product is a HIT! A lot of the food media think that this year is finally the time when halal goes mainstream. Simply put, halal certification guarantees the humane treatment of animals and respect for the land where our foods are grown. This Chicken Tikka is very tender, with just the right amount of Tandoori spices. Certified humane, no antibiotics and 100% vegetarian feed are all attributes that you are going to be hearing a lot more about.”

You Get What You Pay For:

1. Conventional factory farms produce items at a faster rate to make profits quicker, focusing on quantity, not premium quality.
2. Conventional farmers receive federal subsidies to cover costs, organic farmers do not.
3. Tax Payers, not companies, pay for environmental cleanups needed after using conventional pesticides and fertilizers.
4. Unlike conventional factory farming where pesticides and herbicides are used, organic farming is much more labor and management intensive, thus reflecting the true cost of growing food.
5. Durrani mentions a further expense: “Unlike some food brands, we make sure every claim is backed up by well-known and established third party certifiers who have no affiliation whatsoever with any of our directors, employees, or shareholders.” Although this is an added cost, Durrani sees the value for Saffron Road in ethically building trust by giving consumers “comfort, validation, and honest transparency.”
Healthy lifestyle choices, however, are not limited to food. Tom’s of Maine produces toothpaste, antiperspirant, deodorant, mouthwash and dental floss without artificial colors, flavors, fragrances or preservatives. While only select products are organic, their entire inventory is IFANCA halal-certified, with the exception of their bar soap and new “Wicked Fresh!” Mouthwash.

Public Affairs Manager, Susan Dewhirst points to their Stewardship Model that calls for “natural, sustainable, and responsible.” They require that ingredients be “high quality, sourced in nature, simple and understandable, free of artificial additives and animal ingredients, subject to limited processing.” Further, they avoid animal-testing and use packaging that is biodegradable, renewable, and recyclable. All the while, Tom’s of Maine strives to make its products sustainable for both the environment and consumer’s wallets. After all, it’s the cost and sustainability of organic products that are the deal-breaker for consumers. Which brings us to our next question — do organic products make economic sense for consumers?

**CAN WE AFFORD THE ORGANIC ROUTE?**

Whole Foods is often satirized as ‘Whole PayCheck’. When shopping, you may notice that the only difference between the organic section and conventional produce is the price. However, according to several Medical News Today reports, pesticides found in conventional farming show a link between cancer, decreased male fertility, Parkinson’s disease, fetal abnormalities, and chronic fatigue syndrome in children. According to the National Academy of Science, neurological and behavioral effects may result from low-level exposure to pesticides. Other studies show a connection between non-organic food and coronary heart disease, allergies, and hypersensitivity in children. The USDA notes that 99.5% of farm acres are at risk of exposure to lethal agricultural chemicals. Can we afford not to go the organic route?

To help offset the higher cost of organic products, “I try to buy generic household items like paper towels or kitty litter. I feel like I’m still saving money but offering my family better, more nutritional products when I buy organic,” says Thompson.

“Since stores like Whole Foods are miles away, I grow a few staples such as tomatoes, cucumbers, lettuce and peppers in my backyard,” says Fatimah Manasrah from Milwaukee, WI. “The taste and texture is superb and definitely worth the effort. Plus, I don’t have to worry about what I’m feeding my kids because I know exactly what is in the food I grow, from the seeds to the harvest I pick.”

“O ye who believe! Forbid not the good things which God hath made lawful for you, and transgress not, God loveth not transgressors. Eat of that which God hath bestowed on you as food lawful and good (halal and Tayyib), and keep your duty to God in Whom ye are believers (Holy Quran 5: 87, 88)

Finally, a significant aspect of our Islamic identity is to worship and please God. One way to fulfill this mission is by taking care of the body we’ve been given (see related story: Fit Muslim — Come Rain or Shine). Tayyib, or pure, when it comes to crops are those grown without harmful additions. Durrani agrees, “We strive to support tayyib farming practices and proper animal welfare of livestock…the standard of care we require as our gold standard in halal may be too high for almost any mainstream organic farm to meet.”

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**ABOUT THE WRITER:** Asma Jarad has an MA in English from National University. She is a freelance writer living in the Chicago area with her husband and children.

**CONTRIBUTING RESEARCHER:** Mariam Majeed, formerly a food scientist at IFANCA, is currently a homemaker and mother.
WE MAKE SURE THE FOOD YOU SERVE IS HALAL.

ISLAMIC FOOD AND NUTRITION COUNCIL OF AMERICA:

In matters of halal, we take the doubt out of doubtful.

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

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

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It is said that people eat with their eyes first and the way food looks has the power to augment or diminish its taste. Uncomplicated pretty plating techniques can elevate our standards in the kitchen and make family meal times that much more interesting. And you don’t have to be a gourmet cook to accomplish this. Personally speaking, presenting my food beautifully to loved ones gives me an extreme sense of satisfaction.

Pretty Plating
Pretty plating involves using color and proportionate serving sizes. Less is always more when it comes to presenting your food artistically. Three to four components on a plate are more than enough. Food always looks best when served on white plates to provide a contrast and act as a canvas. When it comes to plating your dish, consider complimentary colors such as green and red. Ingredients such as rainbow carrots and heirloom tomatoes can bring that “wow” factor to your presentation. Too much of one color can take away from the visual appeal of your plated dish so mix it up a bit, without overcomplicating your dish.

Summon Your Inner Artist
Cake served with ice-cream is one of the most common desserts. One can simply cut out a square piece of cake and plop some vanilla ice cream on it. Sure, there is nothing wrong with that, as long as it tastes good, right? On the other hand, one can put their inner artist to work and get creative. Consider pepperering the plate with cinnamon sugar before you place the cake on it. In addition, you can melt dark chocolate, and pour it into a squeeze bottle, and create abstract chocolate art (See Spiced Brownie recipe below). This is a great accent for your beautifully plated dessert and takes only minutes to create. Elegantly plated food does not mean that it has to look flawless. Do not sweat the small imperfections. Keep your energy light, mind at ease and the rest will fall into place. Most importantly, have fun with it.
Whether it’s for your New Year’s party or Super Bowl Sunday, here are some Spicy Haute Chefing Company recipes that will leave guests gushing:

**Eggplant and Arugula Salad**

SERVES: 8 PREP | TIME: 20 MINUTES | COOK TIME: 20 MINUTES

**INGREDIENTS**

- 6 slices of small eggplant, ¼ inch each
- 3 cups Panko bread crumbs
- 3 tablespoons chopped sage
- 1 tablespoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 ½ cups flour
- 18 oz. box of arugula
- 1 cup balsamic vinegar
- 1 cup honey
- 16 slices of tomatoes, ¼ inch each
- 16 circles of Organic Valley® fresh mozzarella, ¼ inch each
- 1 cup of freshly shredded Organic Valley® parmesan cheese
- Olive oil
- Basil
- Salt and pepper
DIRECTIONS
1. Mix Panko bread crumbs with chopped sage, garlic powder, cayenne pepper, black pepper and salt.
2. Season eggplant slices with paprika, salt and pepper.
3. Set up your breading station with two plates — for flour and seasoned bread crumbs, respectively. Use a small bowl for your beaten eggs. Place seasoned eggplant slice in flour and coat each side. Dip eggplant slice in beaten eggs. Dip eggplant slice into seasoned Panko bread crumbs. Repeat with the remaining eggplant slices. Refrigerate for 10 minutes in order to set your bread coating.
4. Add 1 cup balsamic vinegar and honey to saucepan. Bring to boil and simmer 20 minutes. The longer you simmer, the thicker the balsamic reduction will be. Set aside and cool before pouring into plastic squeeze bottle. Place in refrigerator until you are ready to plate.
5. Heat frying pan on medium / high heat and add olive oil about ¼ inch deep. Heating the pan first is essential so you do not burn the oil. Place breaded eggplant slices into pan. Do not overcrowd your pan. Fry two minutes on each side or until golden brown. Set finished eggplant on a plate with paper towel to soak up excess oil.
6. Dress arugula with olive oil, salt and pepper.
7. Marinate tomatoes with olive oil, salt, pepper, basil and a splash of balsamic vinegar.

PRESENTATION
Now it is time to plate. Start with balsamic reduction and drizzle it across the plate. If you do not have a plastic squeeze bottle, just use a fork dipped in the reduction and run it across the plate.

To serve, place fried eggplant on plate, top with fresh mozzarella slice and a slice of tomato. Repeat. Top off your stack with arugula and garnish with shredded parmesan. Serve immediately.
Spiced Brownies

Serves: 6-8 Prep | Time: 10 Minutes Bake | Time: 18-25 Minutes

Directions
1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.
2. Grease a 9 x 13 baking dish.
3. Combine sugar, water and butter in a bowl.
4. Add the eggs and vanilla extract, cinnamon, nutmeg and salt.
5. In a separate bowl, combine flour, cocoa, baking powder and slowly add this to the sugar mixture through a sieve.
6. Spread into a baking dish that is large enough. Do not top off.
7. Bake at 350 degrees for 18-25 minutes or until toothpick comes out clean.

For Chocolate Art

Ingredients
1 cup dark Belgium chocolate

Equipment
Glass measuring cup
Plastic squeeze bottle
Wax paper
Plate

Directions
1. Break up chocolate and place into glass measuring cup.
2. Microwave the chocolate for 20 seconds. Mix with spoon and place back into microwave for 15 seconds. Be careful not burn chocolate.
3. Pour warm chocolate into plastic squeeze bottle.
4. Place wax paper on plate. Squeeze chocolate onto wax paper. Create your own unique designs. Try to keep them within a 2x2 inch dimension.
5. Allow the chocolate to set in the freezer for 10 minutes.
6. Use the edge of your counter or dinner table to pull wax paper away from chocolate. Use on top of ice cream, brownies or dessert cakes.

Presentation
1. Instead of using a knife to cut out your brownie, use a biscuit cutter for a neat, finished look.
2. Place the brownie on a plate, add scoop of vanilla bean ice-cream and top with Chocolate Art.
3. Drizzle plate with chocolate sauce and garnish with a few caramelized walnuts. Serve immediately.
SERVES: 6  |  PREP TIME: 20  |  COOK TIME: 35

INGREDIENTS

2 lb. Butternut Squash peeled and diced
1 apple peeled and diced
2 large carrots peeled and diced
1 medium onion diced
4 cloves of garlic minced
12 sage leaves
4 cups of halal chicken or vegetable broth

½ cup of Organic Valley® heavy whipping cream
1.5 tablespoon cornstarch
2 tablespoon Organic Valley® butter
2 tablespoon olive oil
Salt
Pepper
Nutmeg
Toasted baguette slices

DIRECTIONS

1. Heat large pot on a medium flame and add oil and butter.
2. Place onions and garlic in a separate pan with sage leaves and sauté for five minutes.
3. Add squash, apple and carrots to the large pot and cook 20 minutes or until the vegetables are fork tender.
4. Add broth, two cups at a time, to the vegetables.
5. Blend with an emersion blender until a puree is formed.
6. Add heavy whipping cream to the mixture. If you would like a thicker soup, dissolve the cornstarch with equal parts water, and stir it into the soup.
7. Add salt and pepper to taste.
8. Add a pinch of nutmeg for a seasonal touch.

PRESENTATION

HERB OIL INGREDIENTS

10 sage leaves
¼ cup olive oil
Salt
Nutmeg

EQUIPMENT

Blender
Squeeze Bottle

DIRECTIONS

1. Blend sage leaves and a dash of salt and nutmeg with olive oil in a traditional blender, and place into plastic squeeze bottle.
2. Pour soup into bowl. Squeeze herb oil in spiral motion starting with the center of the soup bowl. Serve with a side of thinly sliced, toasted baguette.

ABOUT THE CHEF: Saira Mohiuddin (spicysautecatering@gmail.com) is a personal chef and owner of Spicy Haute Chefing Co, in Lake in the Hills, IL. She offers culinary expertise as a chef at in-home parties as well as hands-on experiences at demonstrations, with recipes directly from the chef’s kitchen.
**IFANCA**

**15th International Halal Food Conference**

*Chicago*  
*April 6-8, 2013*

IFANCA’s 15th International Halal Food Conference will be held in Chicago from April 6 to 8, 2013.

The conference is open to all those interested in halal including IFANCA clients, other companies, independent entrepreneurs, suppliers, distributors, manufacturers and all other stakeholders.

In attendance will be speakers and decision makers representing industries such as ingredients, packaged foods, food service products, personal care products, packaging materials and pharmaceuticals.

Registration details to follow at [www.ifanca.org](http://www.ifanca.org). We look forward to seeing you there.
Ayesha Akhtar is a community health educator for both the Epilepsy Foundation of Greater Chicago as well as HEART Women + Girls, which she co-founded. Her fitness routine involves running an average of 30-35 miles/week, strength training with her sons 2-3 times/week, and spinning once a week. Abs are made in the kitchen so she eats lean, clean + green.
The Fit Muslim — Come Rain or Snow

By Kiran Ansari and Ayub Pathan

We weren’t put on this earth to be slaves to food; we were put on this earth to be slaves to God, is the philosophy New Yorker Zainab Ismail lives by. As her feet pound the running track, come rain or snow, her heart finds solace in dhikr (reciting supplications). Chalk it up to a passion for fitness, motivation, runner’s high or all of the above but “there really is no excuse for letting go of your fitness goals when temperatures drop. From activities at a large sports complex in town to a game of basketball at the mosque, there is always something to do — if you choose,” says Ismail, who is the owner of Fitness Essentials, LLC and Weight Loss Director with Nadoona (www.nadoona.com). Given Ismail’s 20 years of experience as a movement therapist, personal trainer and nutritional coach, when she offers advice you take notes.

If the weather is really bad, Ismail recommends the Jillian Michaels DVD series for beginners and P90X for more advanced workouts. And with smart phone apps, you can get fitness videos at your fingertips — literally. The Wii Fit and XBOX Kinect games can also serve as “undercover workouts” and get the whole family off the couch.

“It may sound corny but shoveling snow (or making snowmen) can also be a workout. Corral the kids by making teams where everyone has to shovel the snow into their fort before a snow ball fight,” says Mubarakah Ibrahim, Founder of New Haven, Connecticut based Fit Muslimah (www.fitmuslimah.com) and Balance Fitness, and invitee to the 2012 White House iftar. Besides maintaining the Fit Muslimah online community, Ibrahim leads its international health and fitness retreats for women to learn about nutritional information, fitness education and emotional wellbeing. The most recent one was held in Bermuda.
Numerous studies prove that exercise promotes the production of serotonin, which reduces depression. Yes, exercise doesn’t just have physical benefits — it makes for a happy family too. Still others, like Sadam Ali and Kulsoom Abdullah, have so much fun staying fit that they are in it to win it.

PLAYING WELL

New Yorker Sadam Ali started boxing when he was eight years old. 15 years later, he is still in love with the sport. In 2008, Ali became the first Arab American to participate in the Olympics in Beijing. Winter does not encroach on his two-hours-a-day, 365-days-of-the-year training schedule. “If you make staying fit a priority, you will make the time for it,” Ali said. “People doubted me, but that made me work harder. Train well, stay focused and pray hard.”

Atlanta based Kulsoom Abdullah (www.liftingcovered.com), like Sadam Ali, is an embodiment of determination. Slender and petite, she is the first Pakistani-American woman to represent Pakistan at the 2011 World Weightlifting Championships and the 2012 Asian Weightlifting Champions. A computer engineer with a doctoral degree, she is also a fan of Crossfitting, a core strength and conditioning program.

“Getting started is usually the hardest, but once you get into a routine or habit, it is not as challenging,” she says. “Whether it is teenagers or adults, I would say find something you like and you will be motivated. Try different things, find friends or convince friends, find a group for more motivation and, of course, try competitions for fun even if you think you are not good enough.”

Abdullah, who adheres to the Islamic dress-code, has earned many laurels including an invitation to deliver remarks succeeding those by Secretary of State Hilary Clinton, at the U.S. State Department’s Eid-ul-Fitr reception in 2011. “Never feel intimidated or embarrassed by how you dress. Most people do not care. If they do, ignore them. Just focus on yourself, your health and the activity you want to do,” says Abdullah.

Abdullah realizes that it can be tough for women who prefer a non co-ed environment, given the paucity of women-only facilities. If you live by a university, she recommends working with the Muslim Students Association (MSA) on campus to explore scheduling time for exclusive women’s access to university gyms. Alternatively, she suggests that women occasionally attend a co-ed gym for training and guidance and work out at home the rest of the time. There always being risk of injury when starting an exercise regime, she suggests having a personal trainer do home visits. “It is harder by yourself without guidance and motivation, but it is better than nothing and you can still get a good workout.”

EATING WELL

Ammiel Mateen, organizer of the 3 Month Challenge (www.facebook.com/3MonthChallenge; http://exhalewithammiel.wordpress.com), is committed to “kale because it can be consumed cooked or raw. I typically eat it raw in a salad, which consists of kale, apples, sunflower seeds, red onions, blue cheese and a vinaigrette dressing. When cooking with kale, I lightly sauté it in olive oil, onion, garlic and light salt. I’ve come to appreciate quinoa so much that I’ve just about completely replaced brown rice with it. There are recipes (for Quinoa) that will allow for it to be eaten for breakfast, lunch and dinner.”
Like Mateen, Tamkeenat Syed is also a runner. "I need efficient fuel," says Syed, a Medical Science student at Dominican University in River Forest, IL. "Cutting out the amount of meat and dairy I consume has done wonders for my physical well being. Although my family is big on eating red meat, now we order lean chicken ground meat instead of ground beef. I have also gotten into arguments with owners of halal meat stores about the meaning behind zabihah. To me, zabihah entails not only the method of slaughter but also the way in which the animal has been raised. (See related story: Does it have to be Organic?). The only type of meat I want my family and I to consume is from an animal that has been given a just, free and happy life."

Abdullah concurs. "I prefer grass fed zabihah meat. I make a compromise in vitamin D with bovine gelatin. As a woman who covers, I do not get enough vitamin D without it and blood test results show it. Vitamin D3 and fish oil (in liquid form) are my main supplements."

“Getting started is usually the hardest, but once you get into a routine or habit, it is not as challenging,” she says. “Whether it is teenagers or adults, I would say find something you like and you will be motivated. Try different things, find friends or convince friends, find a group for more motivation and, of course, try competitions for fun even if you think you are not good enough.”

Eating at home, around a table, is almost always healthier; it boosts emotional wellness too. It is especially crucial to provide children with the right nutrition while parents are still doing the groceries so good eating habits continue when they fly solo. It’s great if parents instill good dietary habits and don’t use candy and food as rewards. Sugar is addicting and if you are not used to it, you will be accustomed to doing without it.

DRINKING WELL

Tall glasses of ice cold lemonade conjure images of hot summer days. However, your body needs just as much water in the winter. Extra layers of clothing plus central heating can cause dehydration. Instead of the eight-glasses-a-day mantra, Ibrahim suggests we drink half our body weight in ounces of water every day. So if you weigh 140 pounds, you should aim for 70 ounces of water daily. Kids playing a sport for more than an hour, should have an electrolyte-enhanced drink like Gatorade along with water through out.

For Mateen, it’s “plain ol’ water at room temperature and coconut water. Water just makes the body function a lot better through the day,” he says. “You’re able to eliminate toxins and keep the stomach full, which sometimes prevents eating unnecessarily.” Coconut water has been a part of her diet for the past five years. “I began drinking it after running in extremely hot weather of 85 degrees and above. I really does hydrate my body and I’m not exhausted later in the day. Coconut water is low calorie, fat-free, has minerals our bodies needs and has a good amount of potassium (just as much as bananas), which is known to decrease the chances of muscle cramps.”

“When I replaced diet pop with water, I felt physically better and my fitness threshold increased as well. I started running faster, I felt less groggy, and I also lost a few pounds!” says Syed. “I read an article that talked about the biochemical ways of aspartame and how it mimics sugar, but doesn’t bind to the sugar receptor. Since the body doesn’t get the sugar it thinks it’s getting, it craves other things instead — so we snack more to fulfill our cravings. Chips and pop go hand-in-hand for a reason. I now choose almond milk over soy and dairy milk. I have also started drinking probiotic drinks such as Kombucha — it is a tea with bacteria that is found in yogurt. If there’s biryani being eaten for a family gathering, I always have a Kombucha in hand,” she laughs.

“The Prophet Mohammed* said to fill our stomachs with 1/3 food, 1/3 water, and 1/3 air — this is the biggest ‘diet secret’ to land on earth, the best formula for maintaining one’s health,” says Syed. “If we are able to control ourselves and adhere to this hadith (saying of the Prophet), we will be in good health, inshAllah (God willing).

As the renowned scholar, Imam Ash-Shafi said, “I have not filled myself in sixteen years because filling oneself makes the body heavy, removes clear understanding, induces sleep and makes one weak for worship.” Here’s hoping for well-rounded winter habits that will give us a head start in the New Year.

NOTE: Information presented in this article should not replace a consultation with your physician before you begin any exercise regimen.

*The words peace be upon him are recited upon every mention of a Prophet’s name.

ABOUT THE WRITERS: Kiran Ansari is a freelance writer with bylines in 30+ publication. She is also founder and CEO of Up A Notch, specializing in personalized party favors and gifts. Reach her at kiran@kiranansari.com.

Mohammed Ayub Khan is a Toronto, Canada based researcher specializing in food industry and consumer trends.
WHEY TO GO
THE BEST KEPT HEALTH (& WEIGHT MANAGEMENT) SECRET

By Naazish YarKhan

As the mother of a high schooler, who puts in long hours studying and on the hockey field, I am rather shocked by how hard these kids work and play. As a parent, I want to make sure my daughter is getting the nutrition she needs to be at her optimum. Something that repairs and rebuilds muscle and tissue, and especially addresses the body’s nutritional needs during hormonal changes. Fitness buffs are all too familiar with protein, and like the word ‘fiber’, mentioning ‘protein’ is enough to get the health conscious to listen. Protein, an important nutrient comprised of essential and non-essential amino acids, is responsible for the repair of body cells, the building and repairing of muscles and bones. It is also a source of energy and controls vital processes related to metabolism. But the best
kept health food (and weight loss) secret is probably whey protein. So versatile a food is whey protein that athletes, lactating mothers, body builders, the elderly, patients and those interested in weight loss, can all benefit from it.

“The first time you taste whey protein powder it may be unusual, but give it a chance. For me, it works best in fruit smoothies for added proteins. Especially if I want that smoothie to be a meal replacement, it helps to meet my nutritional needs better,” says Zaira Ahmad, a Registered Dietician in Somerset, New Jersey.

WHAT IS WHEY & WHEY PROTEIN?
Whey is the watery liquid left over after the curd is formed during the making of cheese and fermented or acidified dairy products. However, as Haider Khattak, Director, Islamic Food and Nutrition Council, Canada, points out, whey is halal only if it has been produced by enzymes from halal, zabiha sources. “Enzymes have to be sourced from microbial or plant sources to be considered halal by most halal certifying organizations,” he says. “Rennet, on the other hand, is an enzyme that is extracted from the stomach of a calf or lamb, and used to coagulate milk to make cheese. It too needs to be certified to ensure that it is from halal slaughtered animals,” he says.

“Whey protein is separated from milk during the process of making milk into cheese. It has one of the highest levels of protein digestibility and is more rapidly digested than other proteins such as casein, that is also found in cow’s milk,” adds Zeshan Sadek, Halal Administrator at Halal Food Council of Europe (HFCE).

REBUILDING THE INJURED, ILL AND WEARY
Protein promotes the rebuilding of tissue. While that is what makes proteins and whey protein important for bodybuilders and athletes, it is also important for those recovering post surgery, incisions and even wounds, says Sarene Alsharif, a nutritional consultant in Rockford, IL. The growth of new skin is jump-started by protein and its amino acids. While the body can create non-essential amino acids, the only way for it to make essential amino acids is when we eat high quality protein foods. A lack of protein in our system, or the consumption of poor quality proteins, can slow down the healing process. Whey protein is often recommended for patients who have had surgery and even those undergoing burn therapy, Alsharif explains.

RIGHT FOR MOTHER & CHILD?
Pregnancy can increase the expectant mothers need for protein by up to 33%. According to Jednak, M., et al (1999), in the American Journal of Physiology — Gastrointestinal and Liver Physiology, “Protein meals reduce nausea and gastric slow wave dysrhythmic activity in first trimester pregnancy”. Similarly, the body needs more protein during hormonal changes such as adolescence, lactation and menopause, and whey protein can provide the body with much needed amino acids during this time.

“Breast milk is best for infants,” says Sadek. “When that is not an option, opt for infant formulas that contain whey protein, even for premature infants, as it contains alpha-lactalbumin, which is also found in human breast milk.” He adds that certain kinds of whey protein based infant formulas have also been shown to help reduce crying in colicky infants, according to a study by Lucassen, P., et al. (2000) published in the journal, Pediatrics.

Protein promotes the rebuilding of tissue. While that is what makes proteins and whey protein important for bodybuilders and athletes, it is also important for those recovering post surgery, incisions and even wounds...

Scoop of chocolate whey isolate protein

“ Babies need protein for normal growth and development and to tackle big challenges like rolling over, crawling and walking. Whey protein is a high-quality, easily digestible protein,” concurs Christine Steele, Ph.D., Director of Science, Innovation and Education, Abbott Nutrition. Globally, Abbott Nutrition sells hundreds of IFANCA halal-certified products that contain whey protein, including infant formula, therapeutic nutrition and nutritional shakes. The IFANCA Crescent M symbol @ appears on their halal certified line of products.

However, since the second most abundant component in whey protein is alpha-lactalbumin, one of the main whey proteins in human breast milk, it is best to consult a doctor to be sure whey protein is right for you if you are pregnant or nursing.
I received the Fall edition yesterday and have already read it cover to cover. The “Do-it-Yourself Udhiyah” was perfectly timed as I have been considering the pros and cons of this for our family. Also can’t wait to try some of Malika’s cookie recipes with the Shortbread being on top of my list. Thank you!

Sarah Kadir

Waiting for my fall issue

Asima Rashid

Assalamu Alaiun.
May Allah make your effort successful.
JazakomAllah khair.
Tamanna Feedous

I like mostly all (the) articles but specially Back- to-School lunches are so simple to make. Halal Consumer website (and) its magazine (are) very informative & interesting.

Thank you Halal Consumer.

Saima Hussain

Super idea, super journal masha Allah!!! Always was concerned about finding halal and safe food in the US & the (magazine) helps me in this. Was looking for safe cosmetics for a long time. Hope Amara ingredients are what I expect. Love the recipes too.

Teruza Begim

Ask Us About Finding
Halal Foods
While Traveling

Visit
HalalHealthy.com
1-888-425-2512
WEIGHT MANAGEMENT

Whey protein, which is nutrient dense, is found in many weight loss and meal replacement products. While portion control, fat-free, sugar-free and reduced calorie approaches to weight loss have been around for a while, trends today suggest eating foods that promote satiety or a feeling of fullness. Hence the recommendation to eat protein and fiber rich meals. Whey protein works similarly even though it is easily digested and efficiently absorbed by the body. Leaving us feeling full, it keeps us from reaching for that extra helping at meals. Research finds that compared to the protein casein, which is found in cow’s milk, whey protein wins when it comes to providing a feeling of fullness.

While portion control, fat-free, sugar-free and reduced calorie approaches to weight loss have been around for a while, trends today suggest eating foods that promote satiety or a feeling of fullness. Hence the recommendation to eat protein and fiber rich meals.

“The body uses more energy to digest protein than other foods (thermic effect) and consequently allows the body to burn more calories after a protein meal. Further, protein helps to stabilize blood glucose levels by slowing the absorption of glucose into the bloodstream. This in turn reduces hunger by lowering insulin levels and making it easier for the body to burn fat,” according to the Whey Protein Institute. “Whey protein also contains bioactive components which stimulate the release of two appetite-suppressing hormones: cholecystokinin (CCK) and glucagon-like peptide-1 (GLP-1).”

“An individual who exercises has greater caloric needs in a day. Whey protein can be an easy way to bulk up smoothies, shakes, or oatmeal with those extra calories. I’ve had a client who had very little leisure time in a day, and spent that time exercising. He wasn’t trying to lose weight, just maintain it, and wasn’t much of a snacker,” says Ahmad. “I recommended he add whey protein to his oatmeal or have a shake with breakfast because it is a quick way to get in those extra calories he needed on days he was working out.” However, if you lead a sedentary lifestyle, consuming whey protein will provide satiety but it will also pack on the pounds.

NOT ALL PROTEINS ARE CREATED EQUAL


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Protein Type</th>
<th>Biological Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whey protein</td>
<td>104</td>
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<tr>
<td>Egg</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milk</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beef</td>
<td>80</td>
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<tr>
<td>Casein</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soy protein</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheat gluten</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reading labels is part and parcel of the halal consumer’s grocery shopping experience in the West. That practice is important to determine if a product has an acceptable amount of whey protein and/or whey protein isolate. The more there is of an ingredient, the closer it is to being listed at the beginning of the nutrition label. For whey protein beverages, either Whey Protein Isolate or Whey Protein Concentrate should appear first on the labels. Whey protein isolate ranks highest for being easily digested and retained by your body.

If you are lactose intolerant, whey protein concentrate may not be for you. Many whey protein bars and beverages such as smoothies also contain gluten. Again, as in almost every diet related decision, do ask a registered dietician for professional advice.

ABOUT THE WRITER: Naazish Yar Khan is Director, Content Strategy at IFANCA and contributing writer for numerous media internationally including NPR, Aramco World magazine, Huffington Post and Common Ground News Service.
HALAL FOR ENTREPRENUERS
Your Key to New Markets

By Dr. Mian N. Riaz
If you are reading this, you have probably been mulling over the possibility of entering the halal certified products business. According to business trends, halal is a $2.1 Trillion global market, with North America’s share at US $20 million annually for halal foods. With the increasing complexity of ingredients and extensive use of animal by-products, any product destined for Muslim consumers should be certified, whether the product is consumed or applied topically. While medicines and pharmaceutical products which are used for health reasons need not be certified, knowledgeable consumers still tend to look for products that are halal certified or at least meet halal guidelines. As an entrepreneur, halal certification can be your key to the halal market and you, most likely, want to know how to make a successful foray.

Let us start at the very beginning.

WHAT DO HALAL CERTIFICATION AGENCIES DO?

In a nutshell, halal certificatin agencies examine the lists of ingredients used in products ranging from food to personal care items, to products used during the production process to machinery. During the processing of halal products, it is necessary to eliminate contamination with non-halal ingredients. Agencies, such as IFANCA, determine whether these processes and ingredients are halal. If not halal, manufacturers are informed of suitable halal substitutes. Only once those changes are made does the agency proceed to label a product as halal certified. When it comes to food production, if companies avoid haram or prohibited ingredients from these sources, halal food production is very similar to regular food production.

WHAT IS A HALAL CERTIFICATE?

Halal certificates are documents certifying that a product meets Islamic dietary guidelines, confirming but not limited to the following:

- The product does not contain pork or its by-products, alcohol, prohibited food ingredients of animal origin.
- It has been prepared and manufactured on clean equipment, in sanitary conditions.
- Meat and poultry components are from animals slaughtered according to Islamic Law.

WHO IS AUTHORIZED TO ISSUE HALAL CERTIFICATES?

Any individual Muslim, Islamic or non-Muslim organization/agency can issue a halal certificate. When deciding on a good halal certifying agency, entrepreneurs must take the time to learn which halal certifiers best meet their needs. If your target is a specific country, it is better to use a halal certification organization that is approved, recognized, or acceptable in that country. If your market area is broader or even global, then an organization with international experience would better meet your needs.
IFANCA’s strengths include:

1. An organizational model that combines the expertise of food scientists and religious experts. The result is overwhelming accuracy as to what is halal and what is not.

2. The sheer variety of ingredients certified — over 25,000 — is unparalleled for product lines from sauces to soap, meats to flavors, colors and fragrances.

3. As a food industry insider, IFANCA has extensive knowledge of food industry safety standards and regulations for nations across the world.

4. IFANCA clients range from small one-person businesses to multi-nationals.

5. IFANCA has representatives all over the world.

6. IFANCA is recognized by many countries including Singapore, Indonesia and Malaysia that have government-approved halal certification programs. Indonesia and Malaysia, in fact, have specific approved halal certifiers for their imports. Of the forty plus US halal certifying organizations only five have been approved by the Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI). Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia (JAKIM) has only three approved US halal certifying organizations. IFANCA is on both nation’s approval list.

HALAL CERTIFICATION PROCESS

The process for halal certification of food products is not complicated.

Steps Involved:

1. Fill out the halal certification application via the agency’s website or a hard copy explaining your production process, the products to be certified, regions the products will be sold/marketed in, along with specific information about the component ingredients. Most organizations review the information and set up an audit of the facility.

2. Once the ingredient information is reviewed and/or the facility audit is complete, you will be asked to replace ingredients that do not meet halal guidelines.

3. Inspection and approval of the manufacturing facility. This includes a review of the production equipment,

Ingredients Reviewed For Halal Status:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food additives</th>
<th>Amino acid</th>
<th>Colors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Animal fat and protein</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dressings</td>
<td>Sauces and seasonings</td>
<td>Emulsifiers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fats and oil</td>
<td>Enzymes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fat-based coatings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grease and release agents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flavors and flavorings</td>
<td>Gelatin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glycerin</td>
<td>Hydrolyzed protein</td>
<td>meat and its byproducts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Packaging materials</td>
<td>Stabilizers</td>
<td>Thickening agents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitamins</td>
<td>Whey protein</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sample Product Lines That Need Certification:

- Meat and poultry fresh, frozen and processed products
- Dairy
- Prepared foods and meals
- Packaged foods
- Cosmetics
- Personal care products
- Pharmaceuticals
- Nutritional and dietary supplements
- Packaging materials

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Dr. Mian Riaz is Director of the Food Protein R&D Center, Texas A&M University and on the IFANCA Board of Directors.

Source: Amara Cosmetics
HALAL CERTIFICATION — A STAMP OF PURITY ON INGREDIENTS, ADDITIVES, PROCESSING AIDS
Believe it or not, given today’s globalized food chain each of these ingredients often come from different countries and are assembled in yet another country. This means there are many opportunities for the food to be cross-contaminated with non-halal ingredients. Further, as food ingredients travel great distances, they need preservatives to retain their quality.

Food formulas are constantly changing. For instance, in the beginning there were potatoes. If you froze them, they turned to mush when defrosted. If you left them out too long, they would rot. Today, we are able to have French fries, hash browns, mashed potatoes, tater tots, sweet potato fries and those are only some frozen versions of the hearty potato. Without food technology, frozen potatoes wouldn’t be palatable. Whether it is the harnessing of medicinal properties of traditional foods such as lentils and Greek yogurt, or creating new foods, food scientists and technologists are responsible for formulating foods that are safe, flavorful and meet nutritional needs. With nine billion people to feed by mid-century, these innovations are not only important they are necessary. Adept at creating imitation products, food technologists create both natural Greek Yogurt and Greek Yogurt made with Ingredion® starch — both equally nutritious, both aimed at pleasing the palate. This is especially significant when it comes to feeding millions where food shortage is common. IFANCA halal certification ensures that all the ingredients and processes are in keeping with Islamic dietary laws. Halal certification means products containing additives such as preservatives, flavors and other processing aids, are verified to be free from questionable ingredients.

HALAL CERTIFICATION IMPLIES QUALITY ASSURANCE.
In August & September 2012, National Public Radio (NPR) ran a story on farmers who could no longer afford corn and soy feed
Halal certification: From Ports to Vaccines

Besides food, the latest halal trends include the certification of vaccines and even ports. Two important vaccines, Gardasil® and Prevenor® are now halal certified. The Port of Zeebrugge in Belgium, a state-of-the-art facility, is the largest port in Europe and a gateway to the European Union. As of July 2012, Brussels based Halal Food Council of Europe (HFCE; www.hfce.eu), an IFANCA sister organization, certified the Port of Zeebrugge and warehouses at Ziegler Brussels Airport, for halal trade. Projects like these represent the lengths that IFANCA, and its sister organizations, go to ensure that products used by halal consumers are contamination free, halal and wholesome.

For their cattle. (See related story: When the Price is Not Always Right). They were resorting to feeding their cattle chocolate, gummy bears and bakery byproducts such as “bread, dough, pastries, even Cap’n Crunch”. Trends like these make the need for IFANCA halal certification increasingly obvious. We review the origin of ingredients in your food, personal care products and even the lubricants on food processing equipment, so when there is an IFANCA stamp of approval on a product, you can be certain the ingredients used are from halal sources.

Halal certification implies quality assurance. And that is a service that the food scientists, food technologists and religious advisors at IFANCA provide. At IFANCA, we’re on the cutting edge of food industry trends. 60% of our food technologists and food scientists have Masters degrees and 40% have Ph.D’s in the field. Our religious advisors are internationally respected Islamic scholars with expertise in Islamic Usul-Al-Fiqh and the Shariah. All food additives and ingredients are evaluated by IFANCA to make sure that the food you believe to be halal, truly is halal. Its Crescent-M logo is your stamp of assurance.

Elements of Halal Food Processing

Food Processing refers to the various ways and means to transform raw ingredients into food that you and I can eat. These methods include canning, freezing, refrigeration, dehydration and aseptic processing. Elements of halal food processing involve assuring:

- Ingredients are from halal sources
- Processing is according to Islamic rules and regulations

- Final compositions must be checked for use of any alcohol during processing
- Packaging material should not contain any haram ingredients
- Cross-contamination during processing and final packing must be avoided
- Processing equipment must be washed with permissible detergents
- Ingredients must not be Najis (impure). They must be safe and not harmful, and must not be prepared, processed or manufactured using soiled equipment, or be in contact with impure/soiled items.

If you have more specific questions, the IFANCA website has further details on what’s in our food from colors to emulsifiers. You can also write to us at halal@ifanca.org and we’ll be sure to respond. We look forward to hearing from you.

About the Writer:

Dr. Syed Farhatulla Quadri is Director of Community Services at IFANCA. He holds M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Food Sciences and Nutrition from Kansas State University. He serves as an IFANCA liaison to civic organizations, correctional institutes as well as Islamic Community Centers and his responsibilities include conducting educational seminars and workshops on halal.
If you have lived in developing countries, the notion of food being adulterated with poor quality, even harmful ingredients, is not uncommon. Given the global nature of food sourcing these days, there are no barriers to the growing scourge of food adulteration and fraud. According to Dr. John Spink, Assistant Professor and Associate Director, Anti-Counterfeiting and Product Protection Program at Michigan State University (www.a-cappp.msu.edu), food fraud is so widespread it touches the dinner plates of almost all Americans. Investigations have revealed adulteration in products as diverse as candy bars, tomato sauce and fish.
Spink defines food fraud (www.foodfraud.org) as the intentional substitution, misrepresentation, tampering with or addition of food ingredients or food packaging, for economic gain. These are often unconventional, poor quality, even harmful contaminants. In 2008, melamine was added to infant formula and pet food to falsify protein content, at the expense of consumer’s health and wellbeing. Other food fraud discoveries by Spink and colleagues was that lesser value seafood, and even leading brand name olive oil imports to the US, were being mislabeled as higher value products. Similarly, it comes as no surprise that meat stores, including your neighborhood ethnic butcher, often fraudulently label products as halal. In the USA, laws have been passed in several states against the fraudulent use of halal labels on meat products.

What makes food fraud hard to detect? “The bad guys are clandestine, stealthy, and actively seeking to avoid detection. They’re trying to dupe us. For many products, it is very difficult if not impossible to determine some attributes such as natural, sustainably harvested, any specialty treatment or country of origin,” says Spink.

Foodfraud.org, a database Spink and his colleagues have created, lists the most adulteration/fraud prone ingredients and foods. On the list are olive oil; coffee; apple and orange juice; saffron; honey adulterated with sugar; diluted fruit juice and corn syrup; and watered down milk.

In order to certify food, personal care products or nutritionals as halal, IFANCA certification involves the scrutiny of all ingredients, their sources and handling mechanisms at every stage of the manufacturing process. As far as fraud prevention is concerned that’s a good thing, according to Spink. “Third party audits can really help confirm the trust in a supplier. (They) are (a) key function in addition to ongoing market monitoring for fraudulent product, testing of incoming goods, and a general focus on reducing vulnerabilities,” he says.

IS FOOD FRAUD A LARGE SCALE HAPPENING OR ARE WE BEING ALARMIST?

“The actual scale is unknown or potentially unknowable… first there is no precise definition of fraud, second recordkeeping often is not in the same format, and finally we often are not able to detect that we have received or consumed a fraudulent product. Bad guys don’t submit annual reports of their production! That said... general product counterfeiting and product fraud estimates are 5-10% of world trade... (that’s) huge. Specifically, the UK estimated their “food related fraud” at “around 10%,” says Spink. “Fortunately, the vast majority of food fraud incidents do not include a public health threat. The best way for consumers or companies to avoid food fraud is to work with trusted suppliers. In our family, we buy from retailers who have a vested interest in keeping us as repeat customers.”

ABOUT THE WRITER: Mujahed Khan is Assistant Editor with Halal Consumer magazine and Associate Instructor of Food Analysis and Quality Assurance with the Food and Nutrition Sciences Department at Dominican University, River Forest, IL.

“Third party audits can really help confirm the trust in a supplier. (They) are (a) key function in addition to ongoing market monitoring for fraudulent product, testing of incoming goods, and a general focus on reducing vulnerabilities”
The Dietitian is In
– A Prescription to Aging Gracefully

by YaQutullah Ibraheem Muhammad

Mrs. Molly Darden, an Atlanta, Georgia native, exchanged a sedentary lifestyle for water skiing at age 70. “After several water skiing lessons, I began to believe I could do it and found it challenging and satisfying to recapture the vigor and discipline of my earlier years,” says Darden, 71, a grandmother. “On a lovely August day not only did I get up on one ski, I took my first barefooting lesson (water skiing barefoot)! Woo hoo! I found that my best self is still in this old body. I stay active by jet skiing, doing aerobics and total fitness training.” Osteoporosis, high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, cancer are all common enemies during the golden years. Loneliness has been proven to exacerbate issues. You may think these conditions are inevitable but, as Mrs. Darden show us, healthy aging is possible.
DIET, EXERCISE & HEALTH —
THE CORNERSTONES OF GOOD HEALTH

As most fresh foods, including vegetables, grains and fruits contain sodium naturally, the American Heart Association (AHA) recommends limiting salt in meals, especially for people with high blood pressure. Osteoporosis, which causes bones to become brittle and more likely to break, is as much of an interest as heart health amongst women. A serving of a low fat dairy product such as milk, cheese and yogurt is recommended with every meal for a dose of calcium and vitamin D. A bone mineral density test (BMD) can determine how much calcium and other minerals are in various areas of one’s bones. The results will help doctors predict the risk of bone fractures. Regular exercise, including walking, also strengthens bones.

ENERGY NEEDS DETERMINE CALORIES REQUIRED

How many calories you need depends on how many you burn each day. However, calorie counting alone will not result in healthy choices. Foods may contain similar amounts of calories, but differ in nutrients. For example, milk provides more calcium than bananas. If it is calcium you need, choose milk and other low fat dairy products as meals. When it comes to proteins, peanut butter has more protein than cereal. So if you need protein, choose peanut butter, poultry or seafood.

Level of Activity | Calories Required Daily at 50+ | Women | Men
--- | --- | --- | ---
Sedentary | 1,600 | 2,000
Moderately Active | 1,800 | 2,200 – 2,400
Regularly Active | 2,000 – 2,200 | 2,400 – 2,800

FIBER AND WATER —
TWO SIDE OF THE SAME COIN

Constipation is common among aging seniors. The antidote is getting adequate water, fiber and physical activity. Fiber is found in fruits, vegetables, beans, nuts, seeds and whole grains. While fiber from actual food is better, dietary fiber supplements from manufacturers such as IFANCA halal certified Nutrilite®, Abbott Nutrition® and USANA® are a great alternative. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends 20-35 grams of fiber per day. Any one of these options daily will suffice:

- 1 cup of peas, beans or lentils with lunch or dinner.
- A potato or apple with skin intact with lunch or dinner.
- Whole fruits and vegetables instead of juice with each meal.
- A slice of high fiber whole-grain bread or a bowl of high fiber whole grain cereal at breakfast, lunch or dinner.

Drinking plenty of water tackles dehydration and moves fiber through the intestines, but water can also lower cholesterol and blood glucose levels. The National Institute of Medicine recommends about nine cups for women and 13 cups for men daily, depending on health. Watermelon, cantaloupe, cucumber, broccoli, lettuce, oranges and tomatoes are also sources of water as are milk, yogurt and fruit juices.

The senior years often mean having an overactive bladder. If you are going to be out and about, get your fluids at home and not too close to the time you need to hit the road. Heading to some place new? Make it a point to scope out restrooms as soon as you arrive. “I restrict fluids when I go out and take a urinal, towel and hand sanitizer with me in case I cannot make it to the bathroom in time,” says Mr. Mukhtar Abdullah, 60 from Washington, DC. There are medications for incontinence too. Ask your doctor.

IFANCA HALAL CERTIFIED RECOMMENDATIONS:
- Ensure from Abbott Labs
- Whey Protein from Ultimate Nutrition & Davisco Foods
- Nutrilite Vitamins and Supplements
- USANA Vitamins and Supplements

The Dietitian is In
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by YaQutullah Ibraheem Muhammad

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PROTEIN FOR SENIORS

Eggs are an excellent source of protein — easy on the pocket and on the environment too, given the gallons of water and feed required to produce every ounce of meat. They are also a low sodium food. According to Dr. Mitch Canter at the Egg Nutrition Center in Park Ridge, IL, “A Harvard School of Public Health study found no relationship between egg consumption and cardiovascular disease in a population of over 117,000 nurses and health professionals followed for eight to fourteen years.” The study found no difference in heart disease relative risk whether study participants ate less than one egg a week or more than one egg a day.

“During the aging process muscle mass is lost and we become less effective at preserving and building muscle tissue,” says Marcia D. Greenblum MS, RD Senior Director, Nutrition Education, Egg Nutrition Center. “The Recommended Daily Allowance (RDA) for protein is set at the level for preventing deficiency rather than for optimal health. I think this becomes extremely important for seniors, who in the past were told to avoid high fat foods and in doing so turned away from some of the most valuable protein sources like eggs. Eggs provide a complete nutrient package that can contribute to health throughout the lifecycle.”

Christine Steele, Ph.D., Director of Science, Innovation and Education at Abbott Nutrition suggests whey protein. “Nutrition is critical for older adults to support healthy muscle, organs and immune function to help defend against age-related conditions and illnesses. Yet, many adults don’t eat an adequate diet and consume all the essential nutrients and protein needed,” says Steele. “Whey protein is a high-quality, easily digestible protein that can help adults maintain or rebuild muscle.” (see related article: Whey to Go) A majority of Abbott Nutrition products are IFANCA halal certified and carry its Crescent-M halal certification symbol.

Greek yogurt, a great source of protein, has been flying off grocery shelves but given its high fat content it is better to choose low-fat, low-sugar and fat-free versions. If it is sweetened with sugar or any other sweetening agent, it is not doing you any favors. If you have meager milk allergies, its high levels of casein may not suit you.

MEANINGFUL COMPANIONSHIP

According to a six year Health and Retirement Study published in June 2012 in the Archives of Internal Medicine, “loneliness in older people can predict declines in health and an increased risk of death”. While those who lived alone were at greater risk, participants in this study included those with sizable social networks and those who were married or living with others but who still self-identified as lonely. According to the Quran, “Verily, in the remembrance of God do hearts find rest.” (13:28) The best solution for loneliness, of course, is time spent strengthening one’s relationship with God, establishing regular prayer, reading the Quran and serving His people — the needy, the wayfarer, the orphan. While discussing issues with others opens the door to getting help that you may not know is available, the Quran also emphasizes being “...firm or patient in pain or suffering, and adversity, and throughout all periods of panic. Such are the people of truth, the God fearing.” (2:177). The Prophets, peace be upon them, are our role models. As Prophet Jacob said, “I only complain of my grief and sorrow to God, and I know from God that which you know not.” (12:86). God, after all, promises “…verily, with hardship, there is ease.” (94:5). We have to view trials and tribulations as opportunities to earn His blessings. Finally, being grateful to God is important. God has pledged that “…if you are grateful, I will add more favors unto you.” (14:7).

Companionship with likeminded individuals, or those in the same boat as oneself, are other ways to lift the shroud of loneliness. Featured as a ‘Remarkable Woman’ by Chicago Tribune newspaper in September 2012, founder Dr. Talat Khan is the inspiration behind American Association of Retired Asians (www.retiredasians.org; AARA). The organization focuses on the physical, emotional and mental wellbeing of the under-
SENSORY CHANGES AND FOOD

“It’s hard to chew without my dentures.” “Food doesn’t taste like it used to.” “It’s hard to get out shopping.” “I don’t feel like cooking.” “I’m not hungry.”

These are not uncommon complaints amongst seniors. As the body ages, the senses of taste and smell may change. Medications, too, can alter the taste of foods or effect appetite. Let your doctor know if your medications ruin your appetite or sense of taste. It may also become harder to chew so choose softer foods including peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, low fat cheese sandwiches, yogurt, cottage cheese and fruit. “I realize that I still have to eat, so I take supplements like (IFANCA halal certified) Ensure® to make sure I get adequate calories if I don’t eat as much at a meal,” says Abdullah.

Don’t feel like cooking? Ask your local convenience store to stock IFANCA halal certified J&M Food Products (www.halalcertified.com) that has a range of fully cooked, single serve meals that require no refrigeration and are available, in bulk, as vegetarian and non-vegetarian options. Free from MSG, Soy and artificial flavors, these dishes are as varied as Cheese Tortellini, Chicken Mediterranean and Beef Stew. IFANCA halal certified Saffron Road® also offers ready-to-eat frozen, microwave dinners and sauces made from ingredients that are hormone and antibiotic free. “Or plan meals that don’t require cooking,” says Mr. Abdullah. “I have simple meals like smoothies to get my fresh fruits and vegetables. Or, I purchase pre-prepped food like salads and sandwiches such as a low-fat grilled cheese sand-

FOOD SAFETY & FOOD INSECURITY: CAN I AFFORD TO EAT RIGHT?

Many aging seniors and retirees live on fixed incomes. “The USDA’s SNAP program helps me cover all of my monthly food purchases, including fresh produce and even halal foods at my local halal grocery store,” says Rahil Muhammad Ibraheem, 71. Meals-on-Wheels is another option for low income seniors. Its stringent nutrition guidelines ensure that seniors receive necessary calories and nutrients. In fact, in Wayne County, Michigan, seniors can order halal Meals-on-Wheels too.

Other ways to cut costs:
- Plan meals around foods on sale and in season
- Take an inventory of your pantry before going shopping
- Buy only foods on your shopping list
- Frozen vegetables are as nutritious as fresh ones. They are a money saver if you want to use ingredients later
- Powdered, canned, or ultra-pasteurized milk doesn’t spoil as easily
- Prepare foods you enjoy eating
- Err on the side of caution, and cook only as much as you will reasonably eat

As we age, we are less able to fight off infections. Be sure to fully cook eggs, seafood, and poultry. Food borne illnesses may spread via raw sprouts, some deli meats, and unpasteurized foods (foods not heated to destroy disease-causing organisms).

ABOUT THE WRITER: YaQutullah Ibraheem Muhammad MS, RD, LD is a Clinical Resource Manager and Registered Dietitian based in Atlanta, Georgia. Mrs. Muhammad is also certified in Adult Weight Management by the American Dietetic Association.
Warm apple pie or a spicy chicken stew, a hearty soup or piping hot haleem (a slow cooked, spicy meat and grain dish popular in South Asia), regardless of when or where you grew up, chances are your comfort food of choice elicits those warm, fuzzy feelings as when you first ate them. Comfort foods trigger fond memories, peppered with bouts of nostalgia. For many, it is what their mother or grandmother made for them as children. With families increasingly living in countries other than where they were raised, it is comfort food that connects them with a taste of home.

Cooking comfort foods can become even more interesting when two cultures come together through marriage. Cjala Surrat’s winter comfort food is hot Dutch Apple Pie with Vanilla Bean ice cream on top. “Now let me be clear, not any old apple pie with a plain crust on top,” Surrat explained. “Dutch Apple pie has a brown sugar, butter and cinnamon crumble topping. Dutch apple pie really is perfect for a cliché winter postcard moment.”

In contrast, her husband, Emad Abdul Rahim’s winter comfort food is a traditional Cambodian beef or chicken stew called kutiev (ca-tee-you). “Growing up, we knew that family was coming when kutiev preparations began,” Abdul Rahim
said. “I knew they had started the stew when I heard the unique thud of the solid granite mortar and pestle being lugged from beneath the cabinet and placed in the center of the floor where my youngest sister was often tasked with grinding the garlic, roasted peanuts, chili peppers and kapich (fermented fish paste).”

The couple, who recently moved to Chicago, believe that the main difference between their comfort foods, besides the vast difference in geographic origin, is that his is made from scratch at home. Hers, on the other hand, is from what she deems the “best bakery in Long Island” and mailed frozen overnight, by her grandmother. “Even though I do miss mixing the ingredients, rolling out the dough and enjoying the smell of sweet pie that wafts from the oven, I do get the pleasure of having my plate ready as soon as the timer pings so I can offer up my plate for the first slice,” Surrat reminisced.

Eau Claire, Wisconsin based Amanda Mouttaki was raised through the long, cold winters of the American Midwest, while her husband grew up in hot Southern Morocco. So while big pots of soup boiling on Grandma’s stove or heavy pasta dishes bring comfort to her, he prefers crisp, refreshing salads and anything not very hot.

“AAfter I came to Islam, I adapted my comfort foods to my new halal lifestyle,” said Mouttaki who also has a popular blog, www.MarocMama.com “I found common threads between both cultures and now chicken tagine is our family’s winter comfort food.”

Tagine is named after the special earthenware pot in which it is cooked and is common in North Africa. Amanda has perfected the art of using warm Moroccan spices like cumin, paprika and cinnamon with harder fall and winter vegetables like potatoes and carrots that come together in a light sauce.

“It’s funny how my kids love the Tagine,” Mouttaki said. “My eight year old son wanted me to make it for his birthday!”

CAN COMFORT BE MICROWAVED?

“I don’t think comfort food is microwavable at all,” said Haya Radwan of Washington D.C. “Comfort food isn’t just about the food itself, but about the vibe that comes with it. So if it came from your mom or someone special or if it reminds you of your childhood, then it is comfort food. There is nothing comforting about a microwave. It needs to be cooked with love.”

Personally, Radwan’s winter comfort food is shish barak, an Arab dish comprising warm yogurt soup with dumplings of tiny stuffed meat pies. “My mom always made it for the family in the winter,” Radwan said. “It tastes amazing when it’s nice and warm. Most importantly, it was made with her love, and she always called us to come eat it with her soft, loving voice.” For her sister, Alia Radwan, shish barak doesn’t quite cut it. Alia’s comfort food? The all American soft, warm chocolate chip cookie with melted chocolate inside.

Over the years, Radwan has become skilled at baking comfort foods herself. “I usually bake all the goodies for the family, and I’ve even developed my own techniques on how to make the consistency that everyone loves. It’s so much fun,” she adds.

Surrat feels that comfort foods can be microwavable — after they have been made from scratch.

“It isn’t simply the mechanics of turning on the stove that makes something a comfort food. It is the process that might begin before you enter the kitchen. Many memories I have of special dishes started at the grocery store, as I was told which cut of meat to get or instructed on choosing the perfect piece of produce to ensure the right flavor combination. I think heating something in the microwave is fine the next day — after a dish has been properly fussed over, tweaked and tasted; when an ample number of jokes, memories and family stories, have been told.”

“Convenience can come from the microwave, not true comfort,” Mouttaki says. “In a pinch, it may be the second best option, but when I think a processing plant making microwaveable foods, it doesn’t scream comfort to me.”

CAN COMFORT BE BOUGHT?

The first thing that comes to Aamna Anwer’s mind when she thinks of comfort food is creamy tomato soup with a toasted Asiago bagel on the side.

“Comfort food needs to be something delicious, that’s within reach, makes you happy when you’re stressed — and keeps you warm when you’re cold,” said the newly-wed
Food for the Soul

By Mujahed Khan

While food can comfort the body, there are ways to have its blessings reach your soul. There was a famous scholar who, with his wife, ran a khanaqah (an in-house religious dormitory for young boys). Here the students would spend long hours memorizing Islamic religious texts and laws along with learning good character and piety. After a full day of study, the young boys gathered for the evening meal. They would rush to be seated to serve themselves only to be stopped short. Before they could take their first bite, the scholar would proclaim, “Know that what you eat comes from the ground, and that when I sowed the seeds for the crop, I was with wudu (spiritual ablution) and when I picked the harvest from the ground I was with wudu and when my wife prepared the dish she was with wudu and now when I place the dish before you, I am with wudu, so now when it is time to consume the food please be with wudu.”

Food is truly a blessing from God, and as His servants we must be conscious of the food we receive and show our gratitude by having the proper etiquettes of eating. While most of us may not always be with wudu when having a meal, the least we can do is to begin with His gracious name and finish the meal by thanking Him.

ABOUT THE WRITER: Mujahed Khan is Assistant Editor of Halal Consumer Magazine and Associate Instructor of Food Analysis and Quality Assurance with the Food and Nutrition Sciences Department at Dominican University River Forest, IL.

from Omaha, Nebraska, whose husband recommended the soup. Ideally, Anwer believes that anything her mother makes is comforting because she doesn’t get to eat her cooking very often. That’s why she needs comfort food that’s easily accessible.

Radwan believes that restaurant comfort foods are huge for people in the United States whether it’s a burger and fries or a good steak and potatoes. Many of her friends’ comfort foods come from diners that they remember going to with their parents. They think diners have comfort foods, good service and kind servers that pour the extra coffee, she says.

Mouttaki agrees that for younger, on-the-go professionals, comfort food can come with a check. “With healthier dining establishments on the rise, you can get high quality meals that make you feel good even if a loved one didn’t make it from scratch.”

CAN COMFORT FOOD BECOME UNCOMFORTABLE?

Comfort foods can alleviate stress and cheer you up, but if you go overboard with the extra calories and emotional eating, it can do more harm than good. According to nutrition gurus, three out of four times people overeat due to emotional reasons. Whether you are sick, lonely or stressed, the insulin high that comes with eating may result in a craving for foods rich in carbohydrates and sugar.

So while Mom’s heavy meal can make you feel good in the moment, it can also leave you reaching for yet another helping — a move that may do your health more harm than good.

That’s where eating comfort foods in moderation or having them occasionally makes sense. There are other ways to find comfort too — whether it’s taking up a sport or splurging on a massage or pedicure. Those come with far fewer calories than comfort food and can have similar therapeutic effects. After all, if a comfort food ends up making you feel uncomfortable, it has defeated its purpose altogether.

ABOUT THE WRITER: Kiran Ansari is a freelance writer with bylines in 30+ publication. She is also founder and CEO of Up A Notch, specializing in personalized party favors and gifts. Reach her at kiran@kiranansari.com
FORDSON: FAITH, FOOTBALL
AND THE AMERICAN DREAM

By Naazish YarKhan

The 2012 National Football League (NFL) season began with the New York Giants, the defending Super Bowl XLVI champions, hosting the Dallas Cowboys. It will end with the Super Bowl XLVII, the NFL's championship game, on February 3, 2013. Much of America embraces football season with fervor that borders on the religious. But few, if any, sporting events will be as perfect an expression of Muslim-Americans’ dual identity as those portrayed in Fordson: Faith, Football, Fasting and the American Dream (www.fordsonthemovie.com). Showcasing what it means to be a Muslim American, through the all-American lens of football, Director Rashid Ghazi’s visually stunning documentary is as entertaining as it is thought-provoking. It has elicited standing ovations since its release last year, winning accolades at international film festivals and kudos from Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton.

Shot over the last 10 days of Ramadan, the film is about a varsity football team, the Tractors, at Fordson High School, a public school attended by many Arab Muslims in a working class suburb of Dearborn, Michigan, which has one of the highest Arab populations in the United States. Through football, it portrays an inter-school rivalry that goes beyond the game. When viewed by Americans and global audiences alike, the film makes clear the extent to which Muslims are part and parcel of the American fabric.

Films like this, according to producer Ash-har Quraishi, are an ice-breaker and integral to initiating dialogue and furthering conversations about American Muslims, especially in post 9/11 America. “You look at this community and see how well they’ve been able to meld culture and patriotism. Instead of feeling sorry for themselves, they were even more resilient. They didn’t want to be presented in a pitiful light. They [see] themselves as Muslims and Arabs and American,” says Quraishi.

Muslim and non-Muslim reviewers and audiences, too, have emphasized how necessary and significant the film is. “It opens your eyes a little so you see another side,” said one review, referring to the Muslim perspectives on post-9/11 America that the film presents, a side of the story that’s rarely covered in media.

Now available on Amazon.com, if you haven’t seen it already, this is just the film to watch with family and friends this football season. 🏈

ABOUT THE WRITER: Naazish YarKhan is Director, Content Strategy at IFANCA and contributing writer for numerous media internationally including NPR, Aramco World magazine, Huffington Post and Common Ground News Service.

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A Sample of IFANCA Halal Certified Companies

Abbott Nutrition
Chocolate Ensure Pudding 54846
Ensure Chocolate Powder M951A1
Ensure High Protein Strawberry (Meal Replacement) M350D2
Ensure Nog (Meal Replacement) 0710D4
Gain Advance Next Generation Powder P849A2
Glucerna Sr Powder Vanilla M983A1
ICP Infant Formula Powder 08553RF
Isomil Ready to Feed 0406D4
Pediasure Strawberry Powder P885A0
Similac Advance EyeQ with Iron P343
Similac Advance Lactose Free (High Protein) M763A1

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Lawash Wheat Bread
Lawash Tomato Bread
Lawash White Bread

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Soft Almond Nougat Candy 775886000177
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Tofu Almond Bar
White Christmas Chocolate Mousse(C)

China Mist Tea Company
Best China Green
Blackberry Jasmine Green Tea
Decaf Earl Grey
Kiwi Strawberry Herbal tea
Organic Estate Black-Black Iced Tea
Wild Blueberry Flavored Green Tea
Decaf Passion Fusion-Black Iced Tea
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Organic Reduced Fat (2%) Milk
Organic Whole Milk
Nonfat Dry Milk
Organic 1% Milk Fat Low Fat Milk
Organic 1% Milk Fat Strawberry Low Fat Milk
Organic 2% Milk Fat Reduced Fat Milk
Organic Reduced Fat (2%) Milk
Organic Whole Milk
Organic 1% Milk Fat Chocolate Low Fat Milk

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Farm House Cookies — Chocolate Chip
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Lemon Sandwich Biscuit
Party Biscuit
Rio Vanilla Biscuit
Whole Wheat Biscuit

For a complete and up-to-date list of halal certified companies and halal certified products, visit www.ifanca.org
**Enjoy Life Natural Brands**  
Beach Bash Trail Mix  
Caramel Apple Bar  
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Cinnamon Crunch  
Mountain Mambo Trail Mix  
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**Happy and Healthy Products, Inc.**  
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Happy Indulgence Decadent Dips Chocolate Dipped Strawberry  
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Fruit Goodness Coconut Cream  
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Fruitfull Blueberry Yogurt  
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Fruitfull Strawberry Cream  
Fruitfull Strawberry Juice Bar  
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Kontos Spanakopita  
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Cheese Tortellini  
Pasta with Garden Vegetables  
Vegetarian Stew  
Florentine Lasagna

**National Foods Limited**  
Caspian Basmati Rice  
Fine Food Achar Gosht  
Fine Food Chat Masala Powder  
Fine Food Fruit Chat Masala Powder  
Fine Food Turmeric Powder  
Horeca Select Biryani Masala (Pouch)  
Horeca Select Custard Powder  
Hot Punjabi Pickle Mixed  
National Aaloo Palak  
National Apple Jam  
National Feerni Mix  
National Fish Masala Mix

**NSE Products Inc. (Nutritional Supplements)**  
G3 Juice  
ProBio PCC  
ReishMax GLp  
Tegreen 97  

**Nutrilite**  
Bio C Plus Nutritional Supplement  
BlueBerry Meal Bar  
Caramel Creme Snack Bar  
Carb Blocker 2 Nutritional Supplement  
Acerola Cherry Drink Mix  
Cherry Almond Syrup Blend Nutritional Supplement

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Naan Bread  
Pita Pan Original Pita Bread  
Olympia Gyros Slices  
Olympia Gyros Cones

**POM Wonderful**  
LITE POM Dragonfruit Juice Cocktail  
LITE POM Pomegranate Black Currant Juice Cocktail  
LITE POM Pomegranate Blackberry Juice Cocktail  
Pomegranate Blueberry 100% Juice  
Pomegranate Juice Concentrate  
Pomegranate Kiwi 100% Juice  
Pomegranate Lychee Green Tea  
Pomegranate Mango 100% Juice  
Pomegranate Orange Blossom Red Tea (Light Tea)  
Pomegranate Peach Passion White Tea  
Pomegranate Wildberry White Tea (Light Tea)  
100% Pomegranate Juice  
LITE POM Pomegranate Juice Cocktail  
Pomegranate Blackberry Tea

**Re-Vita Manufacturing**  
All Natural Vegetable Fiber  
Power Juice Fruits Tablets  
Re-Vita LiquaCalcium Lemon-Lime  
Re-Vita LiquaSpirulina Very Berry

**Re-Vita Manufacturing**  
Power Juice Vegetables Tablets  
Re-Vita Bones & Joints Tablets

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For a complete and up-to-date list of halal certified companies and halal certified products, visit [www.ifanca.org](http://www.ifanca.org)
Re-Vita Derm Tablets
Re-Vita DHEA Tablets
Re-Vita Enzymes Capsules
Re-Vita Healthy Male Tablets
Re-Vita LiquaHealth Butternut
Re-Vita Spira Tabs Tablets

Reliv International
Reliv Arthaffect Dietary Supplement
Reliv Classic Powdered Supplement
Reliv Natural Orange Flavor Innergize Sports Drink
Reliv Now for Kids Chocolate Dietary Supplement
Reliv ProVantage Dietary Supplement
Reliv Reversage Dietary Supplement
Reliv SoySentials Dietary Supplement
Reliv Vanilla Simplicity® Meal Replacement
Reliv Celebrate Dietary Supplement
Reliv Chocolate Simplicity® Meal Replacement

Saffron Road/American Halal Co.
Chicken Biryani Frozen Dinner 57063 00204
Tikka Masala Frozen Dinner 57063 00200
Lamb Saag Frozen Dinner 57063 00202
Lamb Vindaloo Frozen Dinner 57063 00203

Sun Dates LLC
SunDate 16oz Pitted Dates Cup
SunDate 2lb. Medjool Date Tub
SunDate 2lb. Pitted Dates Tub
SunPalm 2lb. Medjool Date Tub
SunDate 12oz. Medjool Date Clamshell
SunDate 12oz. Whole Date Cup

Sun-Maid Growers of California
Prune
Raisins with Oil: Bulk Pack
Raisins: Retail Packs

Sunrider International
Dr. Chen’s Hand & Body Lotion
Dr. Chen Aftershave
Kandesn Aftershave
Kandesn Color Compact Insert-Blush-Coral Rose
Kandesn Lash Enhancer Mascara — Brown
Kandesn Moisturizing Lip Color — Cocoa Shimmer
Kandesn Nail Lacquer — fresh Berry
Kandesn Night Emulsion
Kandesn Shampoo
Kandesn Sheer Silk Translucent Powder — Dark
Kandesn SPF 25 Protective Emulsion
Oil-Lin Deep Moisture Lotion SPF 25
Oil-Lin Facial Toner
Suneergy Calli Beverage, Cinnamon Flavor
VitaShake Cocoa Herb Food/Meal Replacement

SunSweet Growers, Inc
Plum Puree
Plum Smart
Plums

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To help the polar bear, we’re partnering with World Wildlife Fund to help protect its Arctic home. To raise awareness and additional support for this initiative, we’re turning our cans and bottle caps white, and inviting the world to join us in our effort to create an Arctic refuge. By working with local communities, supporting research and through additional conservation work, WWF will strive to protect the space the polar bear so desperately needs and help ensure they have a place to call home. Arctic Home is just one example of our efforts to effect positive change in the world as part of our Live Positively commitment. LEARN MORE AT ARCTICHOME.COM