



Transcript of Sky Radio Interview (March & April 2010)

Presenter (Dennis Michael): The nutritional needs of a growing demographic are creating new categories in the food industry as demands for food prepared to halal standards. Our next guest is Dr. Muhammad Chaudry, president of the Islamic Food and Nutrition Council of America. He joins us to talk about that. Dr. Chaudry welcome to the show.

Dr. Chaudry: Thank you.

Presenter (Dennis Michael): Let's clarify before we get too far along for those who are unfamiliar with what is halal, and what is the growing demand for those products that meet that standard mean for our economy?

Dr. Chaudry: Halal is very simple. Its food that is allowed for Muslims and there are two main elements to that; and that is no pork allowed, and no alcohol allowed. There are some other qualifiers also.

Presenter (Dennis Michael): So, I gather it's not terribly difficult for existing products to be certified to be halal standards. What's required in representative cases?

Dr. Chaudry: For majority of the products, it's looking at formulations and replacing the ingredients which do not meet our standards. For meat, it's a little bit difficult where the animals actually have to be slaughtered by Muslims. Obviously, avoiding alcohol during cooking; offering a drink, all that can be avoided.

Presenter (Dennis Michael): Now let's talk about the business aspect of this. What does the halal market represent in the present and the future of the US food economy?

Dr. Chaudry: There are no strict numbers but different estimations put the halal food budget at around \$20 billion for 8 million US Muslims. And the total budget for Muslim population in USA is \$170 billion US Dollars.

Presenter (Dennis Michael): Now if I understand correctly, a large number of large brand-name manufacturers in the US and Canada is already aboard with the halal standards. Who's with you on this already?

Dr. Chaudry: Pretty much everybody who is exporting the products to South East Asia and Middle East, starting with Nestle, Kraft, Abbot Nutrition, ConAgra, and all the mid to small size companies.

Presenter (Dennis Michael): Well, Dr. Chaudry, thank you very much for joining us here on Sky Radio, and opening our eyes to a growing category.

Dr. Chaudry: Thank you for having me.

Presenter (Dennis Michael): Dr. Muhammad Munir Chaudry, the president of Islamic Food and Nutrition Council of America. We reached him by phone from his office in Chicago and they're on the web: www.ifanca.org.