

# HALAL DIGEST

AUGUST 2000

A Publication of the Islamic Food And Nutrition Council Of America

◆ 5901 N. Cicero Avenue ◆ Suite 309 ◆ Chicago, Illinois 60646 ◆ (773) 283-3708 ◆ [www.ifanca.org](http://www.ifanca.org) ◆

يَتَأَيَّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ وَالْأَنْصَابُ وَالْأَزْلَامُ رِجْسٌ مِّنْ  
عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ فَأَجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ﴿٩٠﴾ إِنَّمَا يَرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ  
يُوقِعَ بَيْنَكُمْ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ فِي الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ وَيَصُدَّكُمْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ  
اللَّهِ وَعَنِ الصَّلَاةِ فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ مُنْتَهُونَ ﴿٩١﴾

## ASSALAAMU ALAIKUM WA RAHMATULLAH

**O ye who believe! intoxicants and gambling, (dedication of) stones, and (divination by) arrows, are an abomination of Satan's handiwork: eschew such (abomination), that ye may prosper. Satan's plan is (but) to excite enmity and hatred between you, with intoxicants and gambling, and hinder you from the remembrance of Allah, and from prayer: will ye not then abstain? (5:90-91)**

Alhamdulillah was-salatu was-salaamu 'ala rasoolillah. All thanks and praise is to ALLAH, Subhanahu wa ta'ala, and we ask that HIS blessings and peace be upon HIS Messenger, Muhammad, salla ALLAHu alaihi wa sallam.

While drinking alcoholic (intoxicating) drinks was prohibited in stages, this was the final edict that was revealed to clearly and unequivocally prohibit drinking. There was no loophole left open. In fact, ALLAH, Subhanahu wa ta'ala, did not say alcohol is haram. HE said "eschew" or turn away from alcohol. Many scholars consider this as a stronger prohibition than just saying alcohol is haram. When these ayat were revealed and the word spread, those who had alcoholic drinks poured them out and it is said the streets of Madina flowed with wine.

The Prophet, salla ALLAHu alaihi wa sallam, taught us in a number of Ahadith that all intoxicants are haram, all quantities large or small are haram, and any involvement with alcohol is haram. The latter lesson means it is not only haram to drink alcohol. It is also haram to buy it, sell it, transport it, manufacture it, serve it, grow the raw materials for it or in any other way be associated with it. This is what "eschew" means. HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH IT!

We know that ALLAH, Subhanahu wa ta'ala, is All-Knowing, so HE knows what turmoil will result from consuming alcohol. As we look at the scientific evidence and the statistics related to alcohol consumption, we find many reasons to accept the Divine guidance. Of course, Muslims do not require scientific evidence or statistics to

accept Divine guidance. It is clear to Muslims that if ALLAH, Subhanahu wa ta'ala, says something is not good for you, then it is not good for you. It may take many centuries to discover some of the reasons why it is not good. In fact, some things may never be discovered, or at least, not within our lifetimes. The challenge is to get back to the Divine guidance and to eschew that which contradicts it or tempts us with shortcuts. ❀

## FOOD NEWS

- ❏ Pending shareholder and regulatory approval, Philip Morris Companies, owner of Kraft Foods, has purchased Nabisco Holdings from RJ Reynolds. The combination of Kraft and Nabisco results in the world's second largest food producer, with sales of \$35 billion.
- ❏ More food producers are moving products to food pouches, rather than boxes or other containers. The reasons range from innovation and customer demand to stimulating growth and it being a natural packaging format. (Food Ingredients Online, 6/23)
- ❏ A Florida jury awarded plaintiffs suing the tobacco companies \$145 billion in punitive damages. The case is expected to remain in the appeals process for many years. What about those exposed to second hand smoke?
- ❏ The governor of New Jersey has signed into law the Halal Food Law and it will take effect in 6 months.
- ❏ Under a new classification, the USDA will start allowing animal carcasses with cancers, tumors and open sores to be used for human consumption. Once implemented, only the affected areas would be removed and the remainder of the carcass would be deemed suitable for human consumption. If you have any concerns about this, contact the USDA before August 29, 2000 at: FSIS Document Clerk, Docket No. 97-036A, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food Safety and Inspection Service, Room 102, Cotton Annex, 300 12th Street, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-3700. ❀

## FOOD IRRADIATION

Many of us have heard about food irradiation. It is a method of reducing harmful bacteria in food. The U.S. Department of Agriculture has issued final processor guidelines for the irradiation of red meat. This means food processors will be allowed to offer irradiated meat and poultry. These irradiated products should become available now. The list of products that can be treated by irradiation includes: fruits, vegetables, grains, spices,

poultry, beef, pork and lamb.

In all, food irradiation has been approved by 37 countries for some 40 products.

The process of irradiation has been available for many years. In fact, the food the astronauts have been eating has been treated by irradiation. Many consumer products have been sterilized using irradiation.

The irradiation process exposes the food to specified amounts of radiant energy. This reduces the amount of bacteria such as *Escherichia coli* 0157:H7 (E-coli), salmonella and listeria monocytogenes.

Irradiated products will bear a symbol so the consumer can identify them. The “radura” symbol will appear on all products that have been “treated with irradiation” or “treated by irradiation”.

Irradiated products are safe. The USDA would not approve the process if it were not safe. While irradiation reduces the harmful bacteria, it does not prevent new bacteria from contaminating the food. Consequently, safe food processing and handling methods must be followed with irradiated foods. This means washes hands, utensils, and preparation surfaces, separating foods to avoid cross contamination, proper refrigeration and storage and proper cooking.

For more information about food irradiation, visit the International Food Information Council Foundation’s web page at <http://ifinfo.health.org/qanda/qairradi.htm>.

IFANCA encourages all safe food handling practices and all safe methods to reduce harmful bacteria. Consumers should feel safe consuming food products treated with/by irradiation. Alhamdulillah for the knowledge ALLAH, Subhanahu wa ta’ala, has bestowed upon us, which enables us to develop new methods of ensuring food safety. (From Food OnSight, March/April 2000.) ❀

---

### **Non-Alcoholic Beer Controversy Rocks Kuwait**

Contributed by Mohammed Ayub Ali Khan

KUWAIT CITY (IslamOnline) – A decisive fatwa will put an end to the controversial issue of non-alcoholic beer in Kuwait, which has whipped businessmen and government into a froth. Saudi Arabia allows non-alcoholic beers to be sold and consumed copiously in the country, arguing that the 0.05 percent alcohol level found in these “non-alcoholic” brands “could never cause intoxication, even if you drank cases of it,” as Dr. Ali Umeir put it. Umeir heads the laboratories in Kuwait’s Institute for Scientific Research and argues that non-alcoholic beer should be allowed in because “this low amount of alcohol has no taste or smell.”

But another laboratory, run by the Kuwaiti Health

Ministry, said that the 0.05 percent alcohol level was “a health hazard and in excess of government standards.”

After the non-alcoholic beer entered the Kuwaiti market in January of this year, it turned out to be massively popular. So non-alcoholic beer importers had shipped in massive quantities of the stuff from various brands – Barbican, Musa, San Miguel, Gelder, Jeffre, Seta and Becks – made in Egypt, Jordan and the West.

But their shipments have been stuck in customs for the duration of the controversy and all await the fatwa with apprehension. The Kuwait City Municipality also confiscated all the non-alcoholic beer that was already in the market until the issue is settled, causing much angst among the public.

(Written by Abdul Rahman Sa’ad and published in Islam Online on April 27, 2000.) ❀

---

### **RECIPE OF THE MONTH**

The recipe for August comes from the IFANCA book, *Islamic Dietary Laws and Practices*. The recipe is for:

#### **Tabbouleh**

Ingredient List:

- 1 cup fine bulgur
- ½ cup onion, minced
- 2 scallions, minced (green & white parts)
- 2 cups parsley, minced
- 3 tbsp. Fresh mint leaves, minced (or 1½ tbsp. Dried mint, crushed)
- 6 tbsp. Olive oil
- 5 tbsp. Lemon juice
- 2 finely chopped tomatoes
- black olives
- salt & pepper to taste

Preparation:

Put bulgur in a large bowl, cover with ample cold water and let stand for ½ hour. (Bulgur will swell to more than double the size.) Put in a strainer and drain. Squeeze out as much moisture as you can with your hand, spread on kitchen towel and let dry for 10 minutes. Blend with minced onion and scallion and work mixture with your hands for a few minutes. Add salt, tomatoes, parsley, mint leaves, oil and lemon juice. Blend well. If needed, add more salt and lemon juice. Line a serving platter with lettuce leaves, mound tabbouleh on top and garnish with olives and tomato wedges. Serves 8-10. Sah-tayn.

Send you recipes to [regional.ifanca.org](mailto:regional.ifanca.org). ❀

---